

LECTVRES VPON
THE THREE FIRST
CHAPTERS OF THE REVELA-
TION: PREACHED IN CAM.

bridge Anno Dom. 1595. by Master William

Perkins, and now published for
the benefite of this Church,
by Robert Hill Bachelor
in Diuinitie.

*To which is added an excellent Sermon, penned at the request
of that noble and wise Councillor, AMBROSIE, Earle of
Warwicke: in which is proued that Rome
is Babylon, and that Babylon is fallen.*

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: for they rest from
their labours, and their works follow them. REV. 13. 13.



LONDON,

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to be sold at his shop in Paules Church-yard, at the
signe of the Swan. 1604.

LECTURES UPON
THE THREE FIRST
CHAPTERS OF THE REVELATION

PREACHED IN 1781

BY JOHN WILKINSON

OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

IN LONDON

1781

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Printed by J. Johnson, in Pall-mall

near St. James's Church, in the Strand

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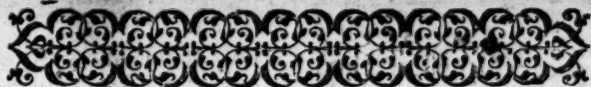
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To the right VVorshipfull Sir
Edward Montagu, Sir Walter Mon-
tagu, Sir Henry Montagu, and Sir Charles
Montagu Knights, M. Iames Montagu, Doctor of Divini-
tie, Deane of his Maiesties Chappell, and M. Sidney Monta-
gu Esquire, the Ladie Susan Sandys, and the Ladie Theode-
sia Capel, children of that right worthy and religious Sir Ed-
ward Montagu of Bowghton in the Countie of Northhamp-
ton Knight, and of the Ladie Elizabeth his worthie
wife, sister to the right Honorable Sir Iohn Ha-
rington, Baron of Exton: and father to the
vertuous Ladie the Countesse of Bed-
ford: Grace and Peace.



RIGHT Worshipfull, as the Pa-
 triarch *Iacob* had ^a twelue sonnes, ^a *Gen. 42.13.*
 so Christ the *Messiah* had
^b twelue disciples: but as *Ioseph* was ^b *Mat. 10.1.*
 beloued about ^c all those sonnes: ^c *Gen. 37.3.*
 so *Iohn* was beloued about ^d all the ^d *Iohn 21.*
 disciples. *Ioseph* was apparelled bet-
 ter then the rest, and *Iohn* was in-
 spired farre better then the rest. ^e *Gen. 41.38.*
 Had it not bene for *Ioseph* Egypt had wanted her food temporall, and had it
 not bene for *Iohn*, the Church had wanted her food eter-
 nall. ^f The future state of Egypt was reuealed to *Ioseph*, ^f *Gen. 41.25.*
 and the future state of the Church was reuealed to *Iohn*.
 The one was ^g exiled, because his father loued him; and ^g *Gen. 37.4.*
 the other exiled, because his Maister loued him. The

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a Reuel. 1. 9.
b Fasciculus
temporū.
c Gen. 22. 12.
d Gen. 28.
e Gen. 40.
f Exod. 3.
g Ier. 38. 14.
h Dan. 2.
i Act. 10.
k Gen. 4.
l Mal. 1.
m 1. Sam. 16.
n Act. 1.
o Exod. 2. 10.
p Iob. 1. 1.
q Act. 7.
r 2. Sam. 2. 1.
s Pro. 1. 1.
t 1. Ki. 19. 19.
u Amos 1. 1.
v Jer. 1. 1.
x Dan. 1. 6.
y Iſay 1. 1.
z Math. 9. 9.
a Mat. 4. 18.
b Act. 18. 2.
Nullum tem-
pus occurrit
Regi.
c Iob. 5.
d Reuel. cap.
1. 5.
e Verſ. 8.
f Verſ. 18.
g Verſ. 16.
h Verſ. 14.
i Verſ. 15.
k Chap. 2. 1.
l Chap. 3. 1.
m Verſ. 7.
n Verſ. 14.
o Dan. 2. 22.
p Gen. 28.
q Exod. 3.
r Gen. 3.

place of his exile was into the^a Island of *Pathmos*, being before by *Traian* put into a vessell of^b scalding oyle. But that God who shewed his visions to^c *Abraham* in the mount,^d to *Iacob* in the field,^e to *Ioseph* in the stockes,^f to *Moses* in Midian,^g to *Ieremie* in the prison,^h to *Daniel* in Babylon,ⁱ and to the Apostle *Peter* in the house of a Tanner, euen he sheweth his visions to *Iohn* in his exile.

He is not bound to persons, he can aduance whome he list, he is not bounden to place, he can reueale where he list. For persons, he can preferre^k *Abel* before *Cain*,^l *Iacob* before *Eſau*,^m *Danid* before *Eliab*,ⁿ *Matthias* before *Iudas*. He can make^o *Moses* a Courtier,^p *Iob* a Potentate,^q *Samuel* a Iudge,^r *Danid* a King,^s *Salomon* a So-ueraigne,^t *Elysha* a plowman,^u *Amos* a Neatheard,^v *Ie-remie* a Priest,^x *Daniel* a Prince,^y *Iſaiah* of the bloud Roy-all,^z *Matthew* a Publicane,^a *Peter* a Fisher,^b and *Paule* a Tent-maker, to be penners and preachers of the word of God. For place, as no time can prescribe against the King of a nation, so no place can prescribe against this King of all nations.^c *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and the Spirit worketh where it listeth.*

It pleased Christ, who is called in this Reuelation,^d that faithfull witnesse, that first begotten of the dead,^e that Prince of the kings of the earth,^f *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and last,^g he that hath the keyes of hell and of death,^h which hath that sharpe sword,ⁱ his eyes like fire,^k his feete like brasse,^l the ſeuē Spirits of God, the ſeuē Starres in his hand,^m the key of *Danid*, who is called hereⁿ *Amen*, the beginning of the creatures of God; and in *Daniel*, he that^o reuealeth secrets, it pleased this Christ to reueale secrets to *Iohn*. Not by dreame as to^p *Iacob*, or apparition as to^q *Moses*, or by voice as^r to *Adam*; but partly by vision, and partly by voice,

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voice as he did when he turned ^a *Saule* into *Paule*. This ^a *AEI. 9.*
Iohn was *Legatus à latere*, that Ambassadour who leaned
on his Lords brest. He writeth Christs historie, there he
sheweth his loue to Christ: he writeth the Churches hi-
storie, there Christ sheweth his loue to him: especially
in this, that he will do nothing, which he doth not re-
ueale to his ^b *seruant* this Prophet. For the Church in his
time, we may see how it stood, in the three first Chapters:
and what condition it should haue for the time to come,
it is plainly set downe in the rest of this booke. If we re-
spect the generall estate of the Church, after *Iohn* had de-
scribed the authors of this Reuelation, which are God
the Father, chap. 4. and Christ his Sonne, chap. 5. he
cometh to the works of God, which are predictions, cha.
6. obsignations, chap. 7. indignations, chap. 8. 9. Predi-
ctions of things to come, obsignations of such as must be
saued, & indignation on things to be destroyed. And for
the more particular estate of the Church, hauing (chap.
10.) shewed his warrant to write, he cometh to her acti-
ons: first, in her Prophets: secondly, in her bodie. In her
Prophets, their fighting, falling, rising, chap. 11. In
her bodie, comparing her to a woman clothed with the
Sunne, chap. 12. and describing her by her combats, con-
quests, triumphs: her combats defensiuē, chap. 13. and
offensiuē in Christ, by words, chap. 14. threatnings,
chap. 15. and iudgements, chap. 16. her victories gotten
against that whore, chap. 17. and 18. the ^d *Beast*, chap. 19.
and the ^e *Dragon*, chap. 20. And all that glorie which
she shall haue in the kingdome of God, is vnder the type
of Ierusalem most comfortably set downe, chap. 21. 22. ^c *The Church*
^d *of Rome.*
^e *The Romanē*
Empire.
^f *The diuell.*

The things in this booke were (I grant) very darke
to them that liued in the dayes of *Iohn*, as the Prophecie

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of *Daniel* was to them who liued in the time of *Daniel*. But as that Prophecie being fulfilled, we can now tell what was foretold in it: so many things being fulfilled which were foretold in this booke, we may easily see what is meant by it: and the posteritie to come shall better vnderstand this booke then we do, because it may be, all things are not yet fulfilled. Neither is this booke like the cities of the^a *Anakims*, or the^b *tree of knowledge* which may not be reached to: for^c *blest is he that readeth the words of this booke*. But to come to these three Chapters written by *Iohn* surnamed the Diuine, & expounded by one a most worthie Diuine. The first Chapter is a Proeme or Preface to the booke: the two latter are Epistles dedicating this booke. The dedication is made to^d *seuen* seuerall Churches, and by name to the Ministers which are called *Angels*. In the word of God Ministers haue many excellent titles giue them, (though now they are scarcely graced with titles) they are called^e *Prophets*,^f *Seers*,^g *Remembrancers*,^h *Trumpets*,ⁱ *Watchmen*,^k *Husbandmen*,^l *Stewards*,^m *Maydens*,ⁿ *Fishers*,^o *Leaders*,^p *Elders*,^q *Salt*,^r *Starres*,^s *Angels* and *Shepheards*. *Prophets* to teach, *Seers* to foretell, *Remembrancers* to put in mind, *Trumpets* to sound, *Watchmen* to admonish, *Husbandmen* to plow vp, *Stewards* to distribute, *Maydens* to keepe pure the doctrine of truth, *Fishers* to catch men, *Leaders* to go before, *Elders* to gouerne, *Salt* to season, *Starres* to giue light, *Angels* to declare, and *Shepheards* to feed: to feed (I say) soundly by doctrine, liberally by charitie, and religiously by life. By doctrine: for *sacerdos sine doctrina, est nautis sine velis*, a Priest without knowledge, is a ship without sailes. By liberalitie: for^u *Nihil habet homo adeo diuinum quam benefacere*, man is in nothing

^a Num. 13.

^b Gen. 3.

^c Reuel. 1. 3.

^d Reu. 2. 1.

^e Gen. 20.

^f 1. Sam. 9. 9.

^g 2. Pet. 1. 13

^h Isa. 58. 1.

ⁱ Ez. 3. 1.

^k Cor. 3.

^l Luk. 12. 24.

^m Pro 9. 4.

ⁿ Exe. 47.

^o Mat. 23. 24.

^p 1. Pet. 5. 1.

^q Mar. 9. 50.

^r Dan. 12. 2.

^s 1. Cor. 11. 10

^t Exe. 34. 2.

^u Naz. in ora.

de pauper.

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thing more like God, then in doing good. By life: for *cuius vita despicitur, eius oratio contemnitur*: his words are not esteemed, whose life is not approued. And that it may be said of them as it was of *Origen*: *Quale habuit verbū, tale habuit vitam*: as his words were, so were his workes. They must not be barren like mount ^a *Gilboah*, but ^b weaned as *Samuel* was, before they be offered vnto the Lord. They must be pure water if they will cleaneſe others, and more then whetstones, if they will sharpen others. They must be in ^c integritie *Abrahams*, ^d in meekenesse *Moses*, ^e in knowledge *Arons*, ^f in pains *Paulus*, and in praying *Samuels*, and remēber, that as *Augustine* said: *Manus pauperū sunt gazophylaciū Christi*. The hands of the poore are the treasure of Christ. I need not speake much of the dutie of a Minister: for euery one wil teach him his duty, that wil not be ranged within any dutie himselfe.

These Churches were then like ^h *Danids* Wor-thies, excellent aboue all the Churches of the world: but because they lost their first ⁱ lone, ^k were not faithfull to the death, ^l maintained the doctrine of *Balaam*, ^m suffered women to teach, ⁿ bare a name onely to liue, ^o had but a litle strength, ^p were neither hote nor cold, and ^q repented not as they should haue done, of all their sins, they are reprehended by *Iohn*, threatened by Christ; and the Candlesticke of the Gospel is now taken away from them. *Iam seges est ubi Troia fuit*. Now *Mahomet* rageth, where *Messiah* did raigne. Are they reprehended? let vs hearken: are they threatened? let vs feare: are they fallen? let vs labour to continue. From *Iohns* reprehension we see, that (as one said) *hercof our Elders haue complained, hercof do we complaine, and hercof they which liue after vs will complaine, that men waxe worse, and liue not according to the doctrine of*

^a 2.Sam.1.21

^b 1.Sa.1.24.

^c Gen.19.

^d Num.12.3.

^e Exod.4.14.

^f 2.Cor.11.23

^g 1.Sam.12.

^h 1.Chr.12.14

ⁱ Revel. 2.4.

^k Vers. 10.

^l Vers. 14.

^m Vers. 20.

ⁿ Cap. 3.1.

^o Vers. 8.

^p Vers. 16.

^q Cap. 3.21.

Seneca.

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Gods word. From Christs threatning we see, that God
y D. ut. 20. 10 is mercifull, ¹ who first offereth peace before he fight a-
 gainst vs, that we being forewarned, might be forcar-
 med. And by the wofull downefall of these seuen Chur-
2 1. Cor. 10. 12 ches, let ² vs that stand take heed that we fall not: for if
 God spared not the ³ old world who despised Noah, the
a 2. Pet. 3. Sodomites who vexed Los, ⁴ *b* Ierusalem which abused the
b Mat. 23. 38. Prophets, ⁵ *c* Colossa, Hierapolis, and Laodicea, who reiected
c Orosius saith Paule, and these Asian Churches who did not grow
d that these cities in righteousness as they did in riches, how shall we e-
e fell by an scape ⁶ if we neglect so great saluation: and for this cause
f earthquake. these Sermons are most worthie to be considered of in
d Heb. 2. 3. this present age. O then let vs now ⁷ consider this season:
e Rom. 13. ⁸ redeeme the oportunitie, ⁹ and not harden our hearts, but regard
f Rom. 12. 11. the time of our present visitation. As the day openeth
g Heb. 3. 13 and shutteth with the Sunne, so saluation openeth and
h Psal. 95. shutteth with the Gospell. ¹⁰ *h* Whilft it is called to day let vs
i Heb. 3. 13. heare his voice: ¹¹ He that laboureth in Sommer is the sonne of
o Prov. 10. 5. Wisdom, but he that sleepeth in haruest is the son of confusio.

All things in the world do take their time, the bird to
 build her nest, the husbandman to sow his seed, the mari-
 ner to go to sea, the gardener to set his trees, the sicke pa-
 tient to take physicke, the cooke to season meates, and the
 dresser of the vineyard to gather his fruite. It will be too
 late to build in Sommer, to sow in haruest, to go to sea
 when the ship is lanchd, to transplant trees when they
 are old, to take physicke when we are dying, to season
 meates when they are vnseasoned, & when winter is come
 to gather fruite. The ¹² five foolish virgins came too late,
k Mat. 25. 10. ¹³ *l* Dines ¹⁴ in hell repenteth too late, the time present is on-
l Luk. 13. ly ours. Is the fig-tree fruitlesse? it shall heare that sen-
m Luk. 13. tence, ¹⁵ *n* Neuer fruite grow on thee any more. ¹⁶ Get thee then
Solum tempus right.

p Solum tempus
priscus est no-
strum, Seneca.
q Eccl. 18. 18.

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righteousnesse before thou come to iudgement: vse Physicke before thou be sicke, and whilst thou maiest see sinne, shew thy conuersion, as the wise man exhorteth euery man. But alas, whereunto shall I liken this generation: we are like the *Ephesians*, we haue^a lost our first loue, or the *Laodiceans*, we are^b neither hote nor cold: or the twilight, neither day nor night: or the *Autumne*, neither faire nor fowle: or one sicke of an ague, one day well another ill: or a man in a *Lethargie*, neither aliue nor dead: or *Hermaphroditus*, neither male nor female: or to those creatures called *Aquibia*, which liue in water or on land: or the *Lionesse*, which the oftener she breedeth, the fewer cubs she beareth: or the *Mariner*, who is onely good in a storme: or the *Marigold*, that shutteth and openeth with the Sunne: or the *Mermaides*, which are halfe flesh half fish. I would to God we were either hote or cold: that as the hottest regions bring forth sweetest spices, so most zealous people might be most fruitfull in good workes: that as the Sunne in the heauen is swiftest at her setting, so the sonnes of God might be best at their ending. But is it so? no: the more we are taught, the more ignorant are many; and the older we are, the colder in religion. We haue indeed many of vs, as it was said of *Aristogiton*, *Martem*, or rather *religionem in lingua*, religion in tong: but when trial is made of vs, euery^c *Phocion* can espie our halting: and then with^d *Archilochus* we thinke it better *clipeum abijcere quam interire*, euen to cast off all religion, then to vndergo the least disgrace for religion.

^e The *Moone* desiring to be apparelled as the rest of the Planets, answer was made her, that her diuerse chaunges could admit no kind of habite. And we desiring to be attired with the robes of Christians, it is to be feared, that

^a *Apo. 2.*

^b *Apo. 3.*

^c *Plutarch.*

^d *in Phocion.*

Theatrum

Philos. lib. 5.

cap. 30.

^e *Treatise of*

Apostacie. c. 2.

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^a Apoc. 12. 1. since we tread ^a not the Moone vnder our feet, we shall ne-
 uer be clothed as the Church was, with the ^b Sunne. Who
 that is, all earbly vani- is wise, and he shall vnderstand these things; and prudent, &
 ties. he shall know them. Let vs therefore labour to ^d grow in
^b Apoc. 12. 1. that is, Christ the Summe of grace, to abound in knowledge, to be full of good works,
 the Summe of righteousnes. and to ouercome all the vnderminers of our future salua-
^c Hos. 14. 10. tion. Then shall we ^e eate of the tree of life, not be hurt of
^d 2. Pet. 3. 19. the second death, tast of the hidden Manna, haue power ouer
^e See Rev. ca. nations, be clothed in white, made pillars in Gods temple, and
 2. 13. sit with Christ Iesus in the throne of his Father. And though
^f 1. Sam. 22. 7. the ^f sonne of Ishai cannot make vs Captains of thousands,
^g Gal. 3. 27. yet that Sonne of Dauid will ^g make vs the sonnes of God.
 That we may do so, we must beleewe the Gospell, put on
 Christ Iesus, and be renewed by repentance. The first is ne-
 cessarie, the second comely, the third profitable. To
 come to the first: it is necessarie we should beleewe: for
^h Joh. 3. 18. he that ^h beleeueth not, is condemned alreadie, he is con-
 demned in the counsell of God, in the ministerie of the
 word, and in his owne conscience, and he shall be con-
 demned in the day of iudgement; for ⁱ the wrath of God
ⁱ Joh. 3. 38. abideth vpon him. The more I consider the fruites of
^k Eph. 2. 8. faith, the more I see the necessitie of faith. ^k Through it
 we are saued: ^l by it we are iustified: ^m in it we liue. We are
^l Rom. 5. 1. saued from Satan, iustified before God, and liue in the
^m Hab. 2. 4. Church. In the Church: nay, by it we liue in heauen:
ⁿ Iob. 3. 16. for ⁿ he that beleueth in the Sonne of God, hath euerslasting
 life. Faith is that which ^o purifieth the heart, maketh the
^o Act. 15. 9. whole man to ^p ranne the wayes of Gods commandements,
^p Psal. 119. 33. ^q giueth entrance to grace, ^r accessse to God in prayer, ^s made the
^q Rom. 5. 2. Elders well reported of, and each Christian to ^t stand to the
^r Heb. 10. 3. profession of Christ. It is that ^u hand by which we must
^s Heb. 11. apprehend Christ: that ^w shield by which we resist all the
^t 2. Cor. 1. 24: fierie
^u Eph. 3. 17.
^w Eph. 6. 16.

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fierie darts of the diuell: and that^a meanes by which we do good to others.^b By faith we receiue the spirit: ^c are members of Christ: ^d we are risen with him: ^e he dwelleth in our hearts: ^f we feed on him continually: ^g resist Satan: ^h are the children of God: ⁱ and the word which we heare becometh profitable. And what shall I say: faith is of such a qualitie, that it ^k uniteth vs to Christ, ^l maketh vs certaine of our saluation, ^m bold in our profession, ministreth ⁿ true ioy, ^o giueth temporall blessings, ^p sanctifieth our gifts, and maketh vs refuse the ^q pleasures of this present world. In a word, no sinne can condemne him who hath this true faith, and no vertue can saue him who wanteth it.

To come to the second, which is Christ, the obiect of faith. The most comely garment that euer we can weare, it is to be couered with the robes of Christs righteousnesse. *Jacob* was blessed by *Esaus* garments; & we are blessed by Christs garments. What we see through a greene glasse, seemeth all to be greene: and what God seeth thorough Christ it is al amiable. We must put on this apanel, not as the Church in the Canticles: *I haue put off my clothes, how shall I put them on againe?* or as a gowne, that we cast off when we come to our home: but we must so put him on, that we neuer put him off againe. We must put him on by imputation, imitation, infusion, and profession: by *imputation* of his righteousnesse; *imitation* of his vertues, *infusion* of his Spirit, and *profession* of his name. Thus we must labour to get Christ: for what though a man could commaund the earth with *Alexander*, the sea with *Moses*, the fire with *Eliab*, and the sunne with *Iosuah*: What though he were as rich as *Salomow*, as wise as *Achitophel*, as strong as *Sampson*, as swift as *Ahimaaz*, as beautifull as *Absolon*, as fortunate

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*a Theatrum
Philos. lib. 2.
cap. 33.
b Phil. 3. 8.*

*c Augustine.
d Phil. 3. 10.*

*e Ier. 4. 1.
Reasons of
repentance.*

f Rom. 2.

g Gen. 39. 9.

h Rom. 2. 5.

i 1. a. 26. 9.

k Act. 17. 30.

l 1. Pet. 4. 3.

m Luk. 13. 24.

n Eccles. 12. 1.

o Psal. 90. 12.

p Heb. 9. 26.

q 1. Cor. 2. 9.

r Mat. 25. 46.

s Luk. 15. 10.

t Eccles. 41. 1.

u Jer. 7.

v Luk. 13. 2.

x Act. 2. 40.

*y Christs col-
ledge.*

as ^a *Metellus*, & descended as ^b *Paul* was of the bloud roy-
al of Princes, yet hauing not Christ he hath nothing. Yea
say a man had the abstinence of *Aristydes*, the innocencie
of *Phocion*, the holinesse of *Socrates*, the almes deedes of
Cimon, the moderation of *Camillus*, the honestie, iustice,
and faithfullnesse of both *Catoes*, all these out of Christ,
were but ^c *splendida peccata*, and to be esteemed as ^d dung
in regard of Christ. For haue him and haue all things,
want him and want all things: he is in, at, and after death
aduantage. I come to the last, it is profitable to repent:
for if we ^e *turne* to the Lord, he will turne to vs: and that
we may turne, consider his ^f *mercies* in forgiuing, his ^g *be-
nefites* in giuing, his ^h *patience* in forbearing, and his ⁱ *iudg-
ments* in punishing. ^k The word preached, ^l *sinnes* commit-
ted, and that ^m *few* shall be sau'd: ⁿ the shortnesse of life,
^o the *uncertaintie* of life, ^p and the *certaintie* of death: ^q the
ioyes of heauen, ^r the *torments* of hell, the ^s *comfort* of the
elect, and that else we can haue no ^t *comfort* in death:
^u *pray* we cannot vnlesse we repent, and ^v *perish* we shall
vnlesse we repent: but *blessed* shall we be if we do repent.
But *manum de tabula Magister adest*: this discourse follow-
ing will teach vs these things: and it am I bold to present
to your Worshipps. *Iohn* sent his Reuelation to many
Churches, and I present his Epistles to many worthie
personages: and to whom may I better present them the
to you. *Iohn* was a discipule full of loue, and you are bree-
threll full of loue. The Preacher of these *Lectures* was well
knowneto many, but to none better then to many of
you, especially to those who were in my time worthie
members of that most worthie ^y *Colledge* with him. And
the rather I do it, that times to come may reioyce in the
Lord, that from one honorable root haue issued so many
profita-

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profitable branches to the Church. You are fixe brethren as pillars of your house, there were three sisters as fruitfull vines of the same: one is not, but is with the Lord, and her I knew a Ladie of admirable vertues: the other two are, and long may they be so. You are all brethren by nature of one venter, nation of one countrie, grace of one spirit, affection of one heart, fortune in great fauour, and of one hope by your holy behauiour. And ^a concerning brotherly loue, I need not to write vnto you: for you are taught of God to loue one another. Your ^b Scilurus at his death need not teach you concord, by giuing to each of you a sheafe of arrowes, which cannot well be broken whilst they are conioyned: for you by your amitie make your selues inuincible. If ^c Chilo the Lacedæmonian died for ioy to see one sonne crowned at Olympus, and ^d Diagoras Rhodius did the like, when his three children got the garland at a wrestling: and ^e Jacob so reioyced to heare of his one Ioseph, to be aduanced greatly in the kingdome of Egypt: how might that happie father of yours reioyce, to see at one time, one sonne sitting as high Sheriffe of the shire, another preaching before the Iudges of Assize, and the third pleading as Councellor at the barre, and all the rest of great expectation in the kingdome? Thus ^f wise sons are a ioy to their parents, and all may behold how good and comely a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in vnitie. Aristotle could say, that parents were not blessed, vnlesse they were after their death blessed in their children. And surely it is no small part of a fathers blessednesse, to see his children like to flourish when he is gone. Nay of all monuments that parents can leaue behind them, there is none (as one saith) like to a vertuous sonne. But all parents are not so blessed. ^h Adams two sonnes could not

^a Soliman was sic apone: Menander. The Lady Wray.

^b 1. Thes. 4. 9. b VVhich had eightie sonnes. Plutarke.

^c Theatrum Philosop. pag. 294
^d Aul. Gel. lib. 3. Nat. At. Gen. 45. 28.

^f Pro. 10. 1.

^g Psal. 133. 1.

Lib. 10. Ethni.

^h Genes 4.

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^a Gen. 21. 9. agree in one field, ^a *Abrahams* in one house, ^b *Isaaks* in one wombe, ^c *Dauids* in one pallace, nor those ^d *two brethren* in the diuision of an inheritance. And though concord amongst brethré (especially such as must deuide the inheritance) be very rare, yet do you, euen in this, most comfortably agree. You are not as *Siméon* and *Leui*, *Romulus* and *Remus*, *Eteocles* and *Polynices*, *Atreus* and *Thyestes*, *Æta* and *Perseus*: but as *Castor* and *Pollux*, *Dauid* & *Jonathan*, *Ioseph* and *Beniamin*; and (as a true friend is described to be) ^e one soule in two bodies. It seemeth that as *Agrippa* the brother of *Augustus* was beholding to *Salust* for that one sentence: *Small things increase by concord, but perish through discord*, so you haue all learned the same lesson: as being perswaded, that as the members of a bodie being once dismembred, they cannot possibly be ioyned againe: so if naturall brethren be once vnnaturally disioyned, no glue will conioyne them fast againe. It were infinite to shew examples of brotherly loue and hatred, ^f and others haue eased me of this paines. Now that good God, who hath brought you from one roote, placed you in one countrie, aduanced you to like credit, and giuen you one heart, giue you also one inheritance in the kingdome of heauen. Thus right worshipfull I am bold to speake vnto you, and the world knoweth I speake the truth, and the Lord knoweth I desire not to flatter. Go on therefore I beseech you, continue in loue, be settled in the truth, and labour to honor him who thus honoureth you. Be not caried away with the ^g shew of this world, but thinke religion the best nobilitie, and that as ^h *Prudentius* said:

*Generosa Christi secta nobilitat viros,
Cui quisquis seruit, ille verè est nobilis.*

He

^e *quod est una
anima in duobus
corporibus.*

^f See French
Acad. m. pag.
342. &c.

^g *Eximius ven-
blanda faller-
is imagine
mundi.*
^h *Prudentius*
lib. 1. c. 10.

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He noble is that comes of Christ his race:

Who serues this Lord, he surely is not base.

And this made *Theodosius* more to thanke God, that he was a Christian then a king; considering that he must lose the one, he could not lose the other. Now as to one of you I am bounden in particular, and by him, being a Minister, the despised Ministry is not a litle graced: so for him I pray, that he may be an ^a *Abraham* to our *Abimelech*, ^b *Nathan* to our *Dauid*, ^c *Ichoida* to our *Ioash*, ^d an *Ebedmelech* to *Jeremiah*, an ^e *Elisha* to the widow of this Prophet deceased, a light in the Court, a trumpet in the Church, and that ^f *Abashuerosh* may long hold out his golden scepter vnto him: that by his meanes ^g *great men may not want such as will tell them the truth*: no ^h earthly *Alexander* accounted a sonne of *Iupiter*, and that no man may be more respected then a good ⁱ Pastor: and that he may euer remember that saying of wise *Salomon*: ^k *He that loneth purenes of heart, for the grace of his lips the King shall be his friend*. His *Cyrus* will not be spoken to *verbis bis sinis* in filken words, to his *Alexander* he needeth not speake ^l *η ηκισα η α ε η δισα*, either sweet words or no words. For if one *Antiochus* might be surnamed *holy*, & another good Prince called the *Good King*: much more may he, whose religious knowledge surpasseth all the Princes that haue bene of this nation: and whose humilitie is such, that he will haue his sonne to remember, ¹ *that he differeth not in stuffe, but in vse from the rest of his people, and that by Gods ordinance*. I am the bolder for that one to make choice of you all in the dedication of this booke: no man knew, loued, conuersed with, and respected this *Author* more then he. He resorted to him in his health, visited him in sicknesse, and preached a learned Sermon for him

Hist. Ecclef.

M. Doctlor
Montagu.

a Gen. 20.
b 2. Sam. 12.
c 2. Kin. 11.
d Ier. 38.
e 2. King. 4. 1.
f Esler 3. 2.

g *Disū regis,
dest regibus
qui verum
dicat.*

h *Plu. in vita
Alex. reports,
that Iupiters
Priests called
Alexander by
the name of
Iupiters son.
i *Βασιλευς
δορυ. pag. 42.
k Fron. 22. 11**

l *Βασιλευς
δορυ. pag. 95.
O dictum vere
regium.*

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*a Problema
Theologicum.
b Maſter Samuel Ward,
Fell. xx of In-
manuel Col-
ledge.
c Autor vite
Ber. lib. 2.
cap. 4. & 7.
d Hieron. ad
Marcellum.
e Aliis infer-
miis meipſam
conſumo.*

at his death. Concerning this author, as he ſaid of *Carthage*, I had rather be ſilent then ſay litle, and his worthie labours do ſpeake enough for him, by name that his ^a Poſthume, dedicated to his excellent Maieſtie, by ^b an excellent Diuine. In a word therefore, whatſoeuer this man did, he deſired to profite others by it: he thought (as it is written ^c of *Bernard* in his life) that he was not his owne man, but deputed to the ſeruice of others. He was neuer idle, but as ^d *Hierome* reporteth of *Ambroſe*, and *Bernard* of himſelfe, he did either *reade*, or *meditate*, or *pray*, or *conferre*, or *conſell*, or *comfort*, or *write*, or *preach*. And thus (as the ^e Embleme is of a faithfull Teacher) he, like a waxe candle, in giuing light to others, in a ſhort time extinguished himſelfe. Yet in this ſhort time of his, what art was he not a maſter of? what vertue was he not endued with? He was a complet Diuine, and hath this bleſſing in the Church, that no mans writings are read of all ſorts, and in all countries with greater grace and profite then his. He was peaceable in the Church, patient of wrongs, and free from ambition. For as *Ierome* ſaid of *Nepotian*, *aurum calcans, ſchedulas conſectabatur*: he regarded not his purſe, but followed his booke, and as *Bernard* ſaid, he liued *in terra auri ſine auro*, in a kingdome of gold without gold. An excellent gift he had to *define* properly, *denide* exactly, *diſpute* ſubtilly, *answer* directly, *ſpeake* pithily, and *write* iudicially: and how he preached, if theſe *Sermons* do giue a teſtimonie, what witneſſe had they who often heard him themſelues? I haue publiſhed of his now two Diſcourſes, and ſonely did it, that theſe his labours might not periſh: I haue no benefite by them but exceeding great paines. And ſince I vnderſtand that his other labours are in the hands of his friends, to make bene-
fit

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

site for his children, I will ease my selfe of the like labour, & be a means that they may haue the benefit of the future impressions of this booke: the which, how faithfully I haue published, I appeale to the godly and indifferent Reader, and I hope no honest minded man will be hired to calumniate it. Thus as one desirous to be *seruiceable* in my calling, *profitable* to the Church, not *forgetfull* of my friend, and to testifie the *happinesse* of your house, which was in your fathers time, and is now (as it is said of *Aurelian* the Emperors,) *Referta piis & Ecclesia Dei*, replenished with the godly, and a Church of God, and withall to leaue a monument of my dutie to you all, I haue as you see, published this exposition of seuen Epistles vnder your eight names, nothing doubting but it will be as welcome to you, as by your countenance it may be profitable to the Church. The God of heauen giue you all that blessing of blessings, which (if *Ierome* say true) few men haue, that you may *transire à deliciis ad delicias*, go on from grace to grace, and be a long time happie in this life, and for euer happie in the life to come. *London:*

Epist. ad Iulianum.

Saint *Martins* in the fields, from my worshipful friend Master *Oldisworths* house, by which familie (as *Paul* was by the house of *Onesiphorus*) in the time of this late (and I wish I may say) the last visitation, I haue receiued no small refreshing. *March 12.* *I 6 0 4.*

2. Tim. 1. 16.

Your VVorships to command,

Robert Hill:

Fellow of S. Iohns Colledge in Cambridge.

Yours Very Truly,

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LECTURES VPON
THE THREE FIRST CHAP-
ters of the Reuelation.

REVEL. I. I..

The reuelation of Iesus Christ, which God gave vnto him.

MY purpose in choosing this text, is to speake of the three first Chapters of this booke: namely, the seuen seuerall Epistles written to the Churches in Asia, which containe sundrie vses & instructions fit for our time and age.

Before we come to the matter, we must consider of one question, which is, whether this present booke of the Reuelation be *canonicall* or not: for some haue heretofore, & some now do call the authoritie of it in question. But we hold, that it is *canonicall*, of equall authoritie with other *canonicall* Scriptures. Our arguments and reasons be these. The first is, because the doctrine contained in this booke is *Apostolicall*, as anie which diligently reads the booke may perceiue. Secondly, because the style and maner of opening and expounding the propheticie contained in it, is *Apostolicall*, that is, plaine, simple and easie, if we consider that it is a propheticie. Thirdly, because this booke hath bene approued generally of all Churches, refused of no one Church in any age since *Iohn* wrote it: & it was neuer called into question but of some particular man, neuer of any whole Church. Fourthly, the things foretold in this booke, came to passe as they were foretold. As among the rest (in one for all) may appeare, by that signe *Iohn* saw in the thirteenth Chapter: two beasts came, one out of the sea, the second out of the earth; the

Question.

Answer.

first signifying the Romaine Empire: the second the Romaine apostaticall Church: which both are come to passe in this last age.

Reasons why
not Canonically
answered.
1. Reason.

Now follow the reasons which some alleage to proue it not canonically: but they be all of no force. First *S. Iohn* he names himselfe in this booke, where he neuer named himselfe once in all his Gospell, no not then when he had iust occasion to name himselfe, but sought to auoid it: therefore they conclude, that it is not his booke, but written by some other, and published in his name.

Answer. The reason is not good. For there is great difference betweene an historie and a prophetic. *S. Iohn* in his historie doth not name himselfe; for there is no necessarie reason, why one in an historie of another man should name himself. But in a prophetic, as this booke is, it is more requisite he should mention his owne name. And so did other Prophets, as *Ieremiah* mentioneth his name in his booke at least an hundred times: so *Esay* and *Daniel* in euerie Chapter mention their names. Then seeing they do it so often, it is no maruell if *S. Iohn* in his booke repeate his name: yet he doth it but fve times in the whole booke.

2 They obiekt, that his style in this booke is not the same with that he vsed in the penning of the Gospell. *Ans.* The difference of the stile riseth from the difference of the matter, seeing he writes an historie, here he pens a Prophetic. Againe, here he writes not his own words, but those which he receiued from Christ by particular reuelation.

3 They say, his booke hath bene reiected in diuerse ages as not canonically. *Ans.* It cannot be proued that it was euer refused of any generall Church, but of some private man. Now the disallowing of any private man, cannot make a whole booke to be reiected: for then the Epistle to the Hebrewes, and *Iames* his Epistle should not be canonically, which be receiued of all Churches.

Now come to the words, which containe two parts. First, a Preface. Secondly, a Vision. The Preface first containes an entrance to his matter, from the first to the ninth verse: the vision, from the ninth to the end of the chapter. The Preface hath two parts.

parts: First, the title of the booke: Secondly, the inscription. The title in the three first verses: the inscription, from the fourth to the ninth verse. The title in these words: *The reuelation of Iesus Christ, &c.* A reuelation is nothing else but a manifestation or discouerie of things secret in respect of men, for the common good of the Church: and so this word is taken here.

Reuelations from God in the Scriptures were of three kinds: first, by dreames: secondly, by vision: thirdly, by created voice of God face to face: as we may see *Num. 12. 6. 8. 4.* partly by vision, partly, by voice. Now this was not by dreame: for he receiued these things not by dreame, vision, or voyce alone, but by vision from Christ, and by voice from God: so then it is mixt, partly receiued by vision, partly by voice vttered from God.

In these three first verses, the Reuelation is described by seuen arguments: first, by the author, Iesus Christ: secondly, the end: thirdly, the persons to whom it was directed: fourthly, the matter: fifthly, the instrument: sixthly, the manner of deliuering it: seventhly, the fruit of the reuelation. The first argument by which it pleaseth the holy Ghost to describe this reuelation, is the author, *vz.* Iesus Christ, he is the author of it, it comes from him. It is called his reuelation, in these respects: first, not to exclude the Father and the holy Ghost, but to shew the speciall office of Christ: for the peculiar office belonging to the second person, is to reueale, and to publish, and to manifest the will of God the Father to the Church: and for that cause he is called the Angell of the couenant, the doctour of the Church, the wisdome of the Father, because his office is to reueale the will of his Father to man. Secondly, it is called the reuelation of Iesus Christ, to teach vs to put difference betweene this reuelation and all satanically reuelations: for as God hath his true reuelations, so Satan his ape hath his counterfeited reuelations, and deliuers them in shew like to Gods, but they differ much. First, the diuels reuelations be for the most part ambiguous and doubtfull, that a man cannot tell how to take the speech and phrase he giues them in: but the reuelations of God, (and that in this booke) are certaine, and in plaine tearmes deliuered. Secondly, the diuels reuelations be betweene him and his instruments, wicked and bad men: these

Mat. 3. 1.

in this and other bookes, be to the godly, to his children and seruants: as here to *Iohn* and the Church. Thirdly, the diuels tend to maintaine idolatrie, errors and wickednesse, *Dent. 13.* these to maintaine true Apostolicall doctrine, and the true worship of God.

Thirdly, it is called Christs reuelation, to shew that Christ now ascending into heauen, and entred into his kingly office, doth still rule, order, and gouerne his Church: and for that cause it is not called the reuelation of God the Father, or of the holy Ghost, but of Iesus Christ, because he guides and gouernes the Church.

Seeing Christ Iesus now ascended into heauen, entred into his kingly office, doth giue his Church reuelations: we see his constant care of his church in this last age of the world. For as in the first age he gaue doctrine necessarie for saluation and that time, and after he gaue his Church Prophecies: so in the new Testamēt he published the doctrine of the Prophets plainly, and also the doctrine of faith & repentance by the Apostles; and now after all these, being ascended vp into heauen, he hath no lesse care of his Church: for he hath giuen it now in this last age a notable Prophecy, and reuelation by *Iohn*.

Which God gaue vnto him. These words be added, to shew how he came by this reuelation, and whence he had it: he had it giuen him of the Father, and these words explaine the former, to shew, that Christ was the author of it, *God gaue him*, that is, God the father, not the whole Trinitie. For where this name *God* is opposed to Christ, there it signifies the first person, namely, God the Father, and the first person is often called by this name alone, *God*, because he is first in order, and the fountaine of the Deitie. For Christ receiues his diuine nature, and Godhead from the Father by communication, the holy Ghost from them both, the Father receiues it from none.

Question. God gaue to him. How can it be giuen to Christ, seeing he was God, and had all things? *Ans.* We conceiue of Christs 2. wayes: first, as he is God: secondly, as he is Mediator and head of the Church, and so he is both God and man. As he is God, the Father giues him nothing, seeing he is by nature the same with

with the Father in all things, saue in proprietie of persons. Secondly, he is conceiued as the Mediator, not God simply, but God-man, or God made man: and so he is said to receiue of the Father in respect of his manhood, as he is God-man, or God incarnate. So he saith: *All power is giuen me of the Father.* Mat. 28. that is, as he is Mediator and God incarnate, and head of his Church. Phil. 2. *God gaue him a name, &c.* not as he was simply God, but as he was Mediator and in his manhood: So here the reuelation was giuen him not as he was God simply, but as he was head of the Church, Mediator and God incarnate.

Neither can any say hence, Christ shall be inferiour to the Father in regard of his Godhead: for he receiues it from the Father as he is God-man, not simply God: and as he is man and Mediator, he is inferiour to the Father, and confesseth that in that respect, *God the Father is greater then all.* And *Paul* saith, God the Father is the head of Christ. 1. Cor. 3. 11. 6. 3, as Christ *Ioh. 10. 19* is the head of the Church, God-man. Nay, as Christ sits at his Fathers right hand, he is inferiour to him, not as God, but as Mediatour: and looke as he receiues all power of the Father, so must he restore it againe, as he is head of the Church.

Now followeth the meanes how he gaue Christ this reuelation. He gaue it to Christ, and made him Lord of it, so that he made this his royaltie and priuiledge: for Christ being king of his Church, and this booke of reuelation being part of his lawe to the Church, he is king also of this booke as part of his lawe and royaltie. Again, they were reuealed to Christ before they were reuealed to any creature, man or Angel, and that as he was man: for his manhood being vnited to his Godhead, he could not but know them ere any man or Angell knew them, as he was man.

First, we obserue that this booke of Canonickall Scripture is *Vlt.* Christ's, he is Lord of it, and the right of it belongs to him alone. For as the lawes of a land belong to a Prince and to none else, so these lawes, the bookes of this Scripture they be Christ's, as his royaltie & priuiledge: for God gaue them to him and to none but him only, and he sent his Angels to reueale it to the Church. Now that which is said of this booke, may be said of all the

bookes of Scripture: that as the royaltie and interest of this belongs onely to Christ, being giuen to him alone, so the same followes of all other.

Then hence I gather: no man in the world hath authoritie aboue these lawes, aboue this booke: for this is Christs priuiledge, nor of any other by proportiō. For these be Christs lawes, al must be subiect to them, none must be aboue them: for then it should follow, that they were giuen to men as well as to Christ Iesus. Hence it followeth, that if all be subiect to these lawes, then no man hath authoritie to dispense with the Scriptures, or the Gospel of Christ: for that is to make men to haue royaltie, interest, and title into these Scriptures. Monarches and Princes haue great authoritie in their iurisdictions, but they must all be in subiection to these lawes of Christ: for they be indeed great, & haue authoritie ouer their subiects: yea more, ouer all causes, yet onely those which be the causes of men: they haue no authoritie in causes of God, as the Scriptures and the Sacraments.

Vse 2.

Seeing these bookes be Christs royaltie, and he alone hath soueraigne interest in the Church authoritie, we note, that he alone can expound Scripture without helpe of Scripture; he alone can giue the true sense of Scripture. Indeed men can giue the sense of Scripture by Scripture: for they haue a ministerie here, and by Scripture they expound Scripture: but Christ alone without Scripture can giue the true sense of Scripture.

This condemnes the popish doctrine, which giues the Church absolute power and authoritie to expound and determine of Scripture without helpe of the Scripture: for that is to take Christ his royaltie and priuiledge, and to giue it to men: but Christ alone hath absolute authoritie to determine of his owne lawes: men indeed in the Church haue a ministeriall iudgment by helpe of the Scriptures.

Vse 3.

We see the excellencie of all the Scriptures, which is the same with this booke. Now this booke, it is the gift of God to Christ Iesus his sonne, yea a most excellent gift: now this is not affirmed by any writings of men, though neuer so excellent.

This should teach vs, to reuerence the Scriptures more then any mens writings whatsoeuer. Then this sheweth the blindness

of

of this age, which delight onely in the hearing and reading the writings of men, concerning the word of God. And yet the writings of men be sinfull and erroneous, euery way imperfect: the writings of God, holy, certain, and euery way absolute, being giuen to the Sonne as he is king, priest and Prophet.

To shew to his seruants concerning this testamēt shortly to be done. In these words be 3. arguments for the description of this Reuelation: First, the end, *vz.* to shew it: secondly, the persons, his seruants: thirdly, the matter of it, *vz.* things shortly to be reuealed. The end of this reuelation was to manifest & declare to his seruants, to wit, the Church of God (his seruants and children) to publish to them those things which should shortly be fulfilled, and this is the maine drift of this Reuelation.

Hence then we note, that the Papiſts erre, who say, that lay men should not haue the word, but barre them the reading of the Scriptures: but the holy Ghost saith, this reuelation was to reueale things to come, not onely to the Clergie, nor to the doctors of the Church, but to his seruants: if so, then to the lay man as well as the Clergie: vnlesse they will say, he is none of his seruants. Then this I gather: if that this booke, being most hard, must be learned of the lay man, then those bookes which be not so hard must be learned and read, and much more those which be more easie, as the historie of the Gospell, the Epistles, &c. Secondly, the persons are the seruants of Christ: this booke then of Reuelation, belongs not to all men indifferently, but it is written for the seruants of Christ: that is, such as repent of their sinnes, beleue truly in Christ, and shew their faith by the fruites thereof in their liues. And so the Lord saith, he will reueale his secrets to his seruants the Prophets: and the Lord will not keepe backe but reueale to Abraham the things he was to bring vpon Sodome and Gomorra. Then seeing those to whom the Lord shewes his will, to whom he declares this book and others, they must be his seruants: we must not content our selues only to heare the word, and receiue the Sacraments: but we must seeke to be his seruants, we must repent truly, beleue in Christ, and shew this faith in obedience, and then the Lord will more and more daily acquaint vs with his will. And the

Psal. 25. 12.

Mal. 3.

Gen. 18.

2a.

cause why we heare the word daily and neuer profit, but be as ignorant and blind as before: the cause is, because we be not his seruants: we be bare hearers, neuer practise that we heare in faith and obedience, we repent not, neither liue a new life by repentance in new obedience. For else if the Lord see any which is his true seruant he approues of him: he likes of him, and acquaints him daily with his will and word, increaseth his knowledge and obedience.

p. 13

Secondly, seeing that this reuelation is written for the seruants of Iesus Christ: I obserue that Christ is true God: the reason is, because they be called his seruants, that is, Christs. The reason stands thus; he which is Lord of the Church & the members thereof, and also of Angels, (as it followeth after) he is true God: but Christ is Lord of men and Angels, *ergo* he is true God.

His seruants: not to all men, to the whole world and euery singular man, but to his seruants. Hereby we see the opinion of those which hold, God would haue all to be saued, and calls all men, is false. For if he called all effectually, then he would offer al the meanes, to wit, the word of God, that so they might be called: but he writes it not to all but to his seruants; now, that which is true of this booke, is true of the whole Scripture. The Lord shewed his word to *Jacob*, not to all the world; not to all nations as to him, *Psal.* 147. 19. 20. he shewed to *Jacob*, that is, his true members, his seruants and true Christians.

Things foretold
to come

Now followeth the matter which is the fourth argument of the description of this reuelation, *vz. Things which shortly must come to passe:* and in this, the matter of this booke is distinguished from all other bookes of the Scripture, which speake generally of things either present or now past; but this speaks of things to come.

The matter of this booke is described by two arguments: first, these things be necessarie, *they must be done*. Secondly, by the circumstance of time, *shortly or quickly*.

First, the matter is things to come, which *must be done*: so speaks the holy Ghost in many places of the word. As Christ saith, shewing the necessitie: *Offences must come*: so *Paul* saith,

There

There must be heresies. *Act. 14.* We must, through manie tribulations enter into heauen, &c. So to *Timothy*: they which be godly must suffer afflictions. Shewing in all these places, that things which are to come, must necessarily come to passe.

But this doctrine agrees not with mans reason, though it be the will of God: for men will say; If all things come to passe necessarily, then it takes away mans free will: for necessitie and free will can not stand together. *Objection.* They may. Indeed *Answer.* constraint and mans will can not stand: but mans will and vncchangeable necessitie may stand both together. As I shew thus. In God there is absolute free will, yet he doth many things of necessitie: as he willeth that which is good necessarily; for he can not possibly will that which is euill, but willes that which is good most freely. So Christ he died necessarily: he could not but die; for he died in regard of Gods counsell: and yet he died most willingly, and gaue himselfe most freely to die when he suffered death: ergo these two, mans free will and vncchangeable necessitie, though not constraint, may stand together.

Men will obiect againe, If things come to passe by necessitie, then it is in vaine to vse anie meanes, as to heare the word, receiue the sacraments: for Gods will must come to passe, do we what we will do. *Answer.* These men must consider, that as God hath appointed what things must come to passe, so he hath appointed the meanes how they must come to passe. Then seeing the Lord hath appointed as well the meanes as the ende, we should by this necessitie rather be induced to vse the meanes, then not to vse them.

To make this more plaine: we must know, there is a double necessitie; one is absolute, another is but in part. I call that absolute necessitie, which can not be otherwise possibly. As that God liues, it cannot be otherwise; he is omnipotent, he cannot but be so. There is a necessitie which is not absolute but in part: as when anie thing done is necessarie, because it depends on necessarie causes. As fire to burne, this is not absolutely necessarie, but in part, because it depends on that order which God set in things in the creation. It is not absolute: for if God should change that order in the creation, then it may be fire should

Day 1. cease to burne, as it did in the three children in the oven.

Now in this place where he saith; *Those things must be done*, it is not to be meant of absolute necessitie, but of that which is but in part: for they must come to passe necessarily, onely in regard of Gods decree. In them selues they be contingent, necessary by the vnhangeable decree of God. In regard of which decree of God, all things which come to passe be necessary; yet can it not be inferred; therefore man hath no free will. For this necessitie taketh it not away, neither the second causes, but rather disposeth them, and inclines mans free will.

Secondly, the matter is described by the time, *shortly*, or quickly. But how can this be true, seeing things spoken of in this booke came not to passe a thousand years after, which is a long time? *Ans.* They may be said to come to passe shortly, though a thousand yeares after, in two respects. First of God, to whom a thousand yeares is but as one day. Secondly, in regard of men: for though a thousand yeares seeme a long time to men ere it be expired, yet when it is once past, it seemes but a short time.

Which must shortly come. He sets downe these wordes for two causes. First to terrifie all carnall and carelesse men; for it foretellet judgement and destructions to those which liue in their sinnes, which be enemies to the Church of God; and so it strikes a terror into their hearts, seeing their destruction comes shortly. And no doubt, if anie carnall man could lay this to his heart, that iudgement must come quickly, it would rowze him, if he belonged to Christ, or else would terrifie his soule.

We here liue still in our sinnes; though we heare the word daily we neuer repent of our sinnes. But if we which be so carelesse, wold consider, that destruction and iudgement must come shortly to those which be carelesse, it would stirre vs vp to repentance if we had anie grace. Let these carelesse men, let these consider, that the hand of God may be on them quickly, take hold on them ere they be aware. Let the young man not runne on in his sins, lest the Lord come ere he be prepared and provided. For the Lord will come quickly, his iudgements they make hast and are not farre off, they delay not.

Secondly, the holy Ghost setteth downe this circumstance of time

Application.

a. Pet. 2. 3.

time, to arme the seruants of Christ, the true members of the Church, against all persecutions, afflictions & calamities which might befall them. For the children of God being afflicted and crossed, they might be impatient and discouraged: but lest they should be so, the Lord here telleth them, that his coming shall be shortly, they shall not alwayes beare the heauie burthen of afflictions on their shoulders, but for a while, a short time, and then the Lord will come and ease them, deliuer them, and comfort their troubled minds, lest they should be swallowed vp with griefe.

It followeth: *Which he sent.* That is, which reuelation he sent, and shewed by his Angell. These words are set downe for two causes. First to shew, that *S. Iohn* he opened and published this booke not rashly, but by calling and warrant from God. This teacheth vs what must be our dutie in all our actions, whatsoeuer we take in hand we must looke we haue our calling and warrant. This was the Apostles practise, as here *S. Iohns*; he opened not this reuelation before he had speciall warrant. So must we looke for our warrant in the word, and till we haue it we must not enterprise anie thing.

If this dutie were practised, there would be more conscience in the seruice and worship of God, more care and conscience in our dealings with men then there is.

Secondly, he setteth downe these words, to get more reuerence and greater authoritie to this booke, that it might more be accepted of: and therefore he saith it was sent by an Angell to the Church. And this is a verie good reason to get credite to it and reuerence. For if an earthly Prince should write his letter to his subiect, and withall send it by one of his gard, no doubt the subiect would receiue it most reuerently. The Scriptures they be the epistle of God, sent to his Church, not by anie but by his Angell: then this should procure a thousand times more reuerence, seeing God sends his letter to his Apostle *S. Iohn*, and so to the Church by the hand of an Angell.

Now followeth the fifth argument of the description of this reuelation, which is, the instruments of this reuelation, whereby it is conueyed from God to the Church: and these be two. First

an Angell, Secondly, *John* the Apostle or Euangelist.

The first instrument is an Angell, by whom he sent this Reuelation, to conuey it to his Church. And so the Lord hath v-
gud. 3, 19
Act. 7.
Dan 9. 21 & 8

So when the Law was giuen, it was by the hand of an Angell. *Daniel* had many of his dreames expounded by an Angell. And the seuen visions in this booke of the Reuelation were shewed to *John* by an Angell. Yet we must take heede we gather not hence, that we may worship them, or pray to them, because they be present about vs and see our wants: but before we pray to them, we must haue a commandement from God, and a speciall promise, that they can and will heare and helpe vs, elsie we must not pray to them.

The second instrument is *John* the Apostle and Euangelist, which penned one of the Gospels, that Disciple whom *Iesus* loued, sonne to *Zebedeu*, kinsman to Christ.

Now to procure credit and more reuerence to his reuelatio, he describeth himselfe by two arguments. First, calling himselfe his *seruant Iohn*. Secondly, by an effect, *Which bare record, &c.* First he calls him selfe the seruant of Christ, not the Disciple of Christ, not Christ his cosin or kinsman, which he might haue done, but he calls himselfe the seruant of Christ. For he had learned that which Christ speaks *Mat. 12. 50.* *He which doth the will of my Father, he is my mother, sister and brother:* not he which is kinsma or cosin, but in this, to do his fathers wil, stands the note of his kinsman. And in this, to be the seruant of Christ, stands the dignitie of a Christian. Had not the blessed Virgin Christs mother bene a seruant of Christ, she had neuer bin saued by Christ. Then by this we see, it is nothing to helpe a man to saluation to be borne of great kinned, to come of Princes & noble blood, but to be the seruants of Christ, to do the will of Christ, this is to be allyed and cosin to Christ. And if we will be the seruants of Christ, we must become new creatures, we must leaue off our old seruice, and as *S. Paule* saith, he knewe not Christ in the flesh, but serued him in the spirit. And we must not content ourselues to be his seruants in the generall calling of a Christian, but in our particular callings. For *S. Iohn* was his seruant not onely.

onely in beleeuing in him, and obeying him generally; but in beleeuing and obeying him in the particular calling of an Apostle. So *Paul*, he was the seruant of Christ, not only generally, but in the speciall calling of the Gospell, in preaching the same. This example of his and the Apostles must be our direction, we must not content our selues with the generall calling of Christians, but serue Christ in our particular callings. It is not inough to professe Christ in publike assemblies, to heare the word, receiue the Sacraments, but in our particular callings we must serue him at home: as the magistrate, not onely in his generall calling of Christianitie, but in his particular calling, as he is a magistrate: the Minister as he is a Minister: the maister of a familie as he is a maister: and so all men in their particular callings must obey Christ. And if the maister of a familie come to the assembly, heare the word, receiue the Sacraments, yet in his familie faile, and performe not the duties of a maister, he is but an hypocrite, he is no true Christian, though men accept so of him; because he must be obedient to Christ both in generall and particular calling.

Now followeth the second argument by which *Iohn* is described, namely the effect, that he bare record of the word of God. Which *Iohn* bare this record, partly by preaching, partly by penning the Gospell of Christ.

And because the word of God hath two parts, the Law and the Gospell, he shewes in the next words, that he meanes especially the Gospell of Christ, adding, *Of things done and sayd by Christ*. And lest any man should call his testimonie into question, he saith he testifies that whereof he was an eye witnesse: he saw it, and therefore could not be deceiued, and therefore his testimonie was true.

The end why he alleageth these words, is to shew that he is a faithfull pen-man of this booke, that so it might haue more reuerence: for he which was faithfull in penning the Gospell of Christ, the same also is faithfull in penning this Prophecie of the Church.

By these words we may gather, that to testifie the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles to be the truth of God, is a true note.

of a true Prophet. And by these we may distinguish betweene a true Prophet and a false; if they bring the doctrine of the Apostles and the Prophets it is true, *Deut.* 13. If they worke wonders, and their doctrine be to draw men from the true God, they are false Prophets and must be put to death. And our Sauour Christ being asked of his authoritie, he alledges *Luk.* 10. 1. *Iohns* testimonie, and confirmeth *Iohns* testimonie to be true, asking them this question, *The baptisme of Iohn, was it from heauen or of men?* shewing that *Iohn* was a true Prophet, seeing his Baptisme, that is, his doctrine was from heauen.

Hereby we see, the difference of a true Prophet and false alledged by the Papists, is no true difference: for they say, If one can worke miracles, he is a true Prophet: whereas *Deut.* 13. false Prophets may do that. But the true marke of a true Prophet is the doctrine deliuered by the Prophets and Apostles: and he which brings this, though he can not worke a miracle, is a true Prophet.

Now followeth the sixth argument, by which this reuelation is described: which is, in the manner of propounding and deliuering of it to the Church. And this maner and forme of deliuerie of it stands in foure degrees. First, God the Father giueth it to Christ the Mediator. Secondly, Christ the Mediatour and head of the Church, giueth it to an Angell. Thirdly, the Angell conueyes it to *Iohn* the Apostle. Fourthly, *Iohn* directed and assisted by the holie Ghost, deliuereth it to the Churches.

Now as this particular booke was, so no doubt all the whole Scriptures were conueyed to the Church. Now in that the Lord hath so conueyed his Scriptures to man, we see his perpetuall care and loue of man, and of the members of his Church. Also we see the great excellencie and dignitie, as also the perfection of these bookes, seeing they were deliuered to man by God, and by him he deliuers his will to his Church.

This shewes the blasphemie and sin of the Church of Rome, who call the written word of God, a dead letter, a dumbe iudge: they hold, that generall Councils be equall to the word; that the vniuersall consent of the Church is about the Scriptures, it giues life and sense to them, which otherwise they say of them-

themselves be but an inkie and dumbe word'. But we see they be farre above all these: for they be most absolute and perfect, and also most excellent, seeing they being giuen of God the Father to Christ the mediator and head of the Church, and by him conueyed to an Angell, who deliuers them to *Iohn*, and he published them to the Church: these degrees of the deliuerie of the shew they be most excellent and perfect.

Blessed are they which heare, &c. Here is the seuenth and last argument of this description of the Revelation: which is, by the fruite, effect, and the profite which comes of it, being heard or read: and ioyned with marking and attention, it brings happinesse.

Blessed. That is, blessednesse which stands in the fellowship of God, and life euerlasting belongs to them, which heare and reade this booke, and marke it, keepe it in memorie, remember the things contained in it, being a prophecie of the estate of the Church, partly present, partly to come.

Blessed is he which reads. Here the holy Ghost setteth downe the proper end of the Scriptures, & of this booke particularly. For the ende of this booke, and so of all other bookes of the Scriptures, is to bring men to happinesse, and felicitie, and life euerlasting. *Ioh. 20.* last: the Scriptures be to make vs beleue in Christ, that so beleueing we might haue eternall life. *1. Ioh. 1. 2.* He declared to them the word of Christ, that by it they might haue fellowship with God the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost, which fellowship is true happinesse it selfe, *Ioh. 5. 39.* Search the scriptures, for in them you thinke to haue eternall life. And in this they differ from all other books and writings of men. For mens writings, being penned either by the light of nature, and so be thence erroneous, and misse of the end of happinesse and euerlasting life: or else they be penned by them which haue light by the word; and so as they agree with the word, they be grounded on the word, and haue all their truth from it.

Seeing the end of this booke, as of the other bookes of scripture, is to bring men to happinesse, we see the opinion and practise of the Church of Rome is damnable, who barre the people of God from reading and hearing the Scriptures in their

Vers 3.

Vers 1.

Vers 1.

Vers 1.

vulgar tongue: for in barring them of the meanes, they barre them of their saluation the end of them; whereas *S. Iohn* would by these wordes, *Blessed, &c.* drawe men and allure them to to reade and delight in the Scriptures.

- Seeing the end of this booke and the rest, is to bring men to happinesse, we are here admonished, all of vs to reade and meditate in them, and search them, as *Iob. 5. 39.* euen as we would search for gold, or some precious thing which we would faine finde, (so the word imports,) And he addeth the reason: *For in them you thinke to haue eternall life.*

But some will say: I cannot reade, I was neuer brought vp in learning. *S. Iohn* cuts off this excuse in the next words: *Blessed is he which reade or heares the words of this prophecie.* So that if he can not reade, yet if he heare and keepe it, he is blessed. Then those which can not reade them, they must procure others to reade, they must hearken and heare diligently.

We must learne to carrie in minde the distinction betweene the bookes of God and writings of men. Gods word brings a man which keepes it to happinesse: but mans of them selues can not, vnlesse they haue light from the word of God.

And if this distinction were imprinted in our harts, we should not be so delighted either to heare or speake the words of God mixed with the words of sinfull men.

First, among the Iewes it was not lawfull to mingle cloth of diuerse kinds: then much lesse will the Lord suffer his word to be mingled with the sayings of erroneous and sinfull men, be they neuer so learned or ancient.

• Secondly, here followeth the right manner and way of hearing and reading the Scriptures, which stands in two things. First, we must set downe a certaine end why we reade the Scriptures, which is, that we may attaine to happinesse, fellowship with God, and life euerlasting. And when this takes place: that we set downe this end, that we reade and heare them with care and conscience to practise them. Secondly, we must keepe the, remember the things we reade or heare. And this second point is principall, to heare and to reade so, as we keepe those things we heare or reade: and so as we make obseruation of that we heare,

heare; so the words import. Here we see the cause, why we heare and reade the word dayly, yet no profite comes thereby: the cause is, because we be onely hearers, we keepe it not to make vse of it in our liues.

That we may keepe the word which we heare or reade, it is so commended to vs in many places. *Luke 2. 19. Mary is said to keepe and to ponder all these things in her heart. Psal. 119. 8. David he hid the statutes of the Lord in his heart. Luke 11. Blessed are they which heare the word and keepe it. Iames 1. 21. We must keepe the word, which is grafted in vs: where it is compared to a ciens or grasse, which is set into a stocke: so the word is ingrafted into our hearts, and there it must abide and bring forth fruite.*

That we may keepe this word, we must first learne the elements of Religion in the Catechisme: both old and young must learne them, for that is the beginning of all knowledge: and though a man reade and heare the word, and yet learne not the grounds, he cannot keepe it. So that we see the cause why many (especially aged folke) heare the word from yeare to yeare, and neuer profit, but are as ignorant as euer they were, they be alwayes learning, yet neuer learne any thing: the reason is, because they will not abase themselues to learne those principles of Religion, those first seeds, without which they cannot profit by and keepe the word.

Rules to keepe Gods word.
1.

That we may keepe those things we heare or reade, we must con our part before we come, we must addresse our selues, we must not rush on Gods ordinance without preparation. In the old Testament when the people offered sacrifice, they must sanctifie themselves: so we in receiuing of the Lords supper, we prepare our selues reuerently. Now that we do in the Lords supper, we must do in hearing the word, seeing there is no difference, but that that Supper is onely a visible word, the word preached is an audible word. When the people receiued the law, the Lord commaunded them to sanctifie themselves three daies before. So then when we come to heare the word, which is the law expounded, we must sanctifie our selues, prepare our hearts to heare it. This preparation stands in these things: 1. we must put out of our hearts all by-thoughts, all cares

2.

1 Sam. 16. 6.

Exod. 13.

Rules for hearing Gods word 2

- and thoughts of worldly affaires, and we must set our hearts to
 2 seeke the Lord, Ezra 7. to looke in the law, that we may know
 the will of God reuealed in his word; withall we must make our
 3 earnest prayers to God, that he would open our eyes, that we
 may see his will, soften our hearts, and make our eares attentiu
 as *Lidiaes* were, and also giue vs grace to embrace his word, and
 keepe it.

When we are about to heare or reade the word, we must haue
 4 humble hearts, else we cannot keepe the word, nor beleeu
 the promises in the same. The Lord he reueales his secrets to the
humble in spirit, that is, which be humbled for their sinnes, trou-
 bled and touched with their owne infirmities, which haue con-
 tite, broken and bruised hearts; but in the proud heart, there is no
 keeping of the word, there is no hole in it for the word to lie in,
 but it is wholly possessed and puffed vp with selfe-loue and
 pride.

2. The heart must be an honest heart: we must not onely haue
 our hearts touched with the remembrance of our sinnes, but
 they must be honest hearts, good hearts, such as are not purpo-
 sed to liue in sinne, or any one sinne, be it neuer so litle, but who-
 ly purposed to serue the Lord: we must not come with vnchast
 or wicked hearts, with minds to leaue all sinne, but yet to liue in
 some one sinne.

3. We must haue a beleeuing heart. *Heb. 4. 2.* The old Iewes
 heard the word, but it profited them not, because they mingled
 it not with faith in their hearts: where he compares them to a
 vessel, in which there must be both the word and faith, and these
 must be mingled together; it must be tempered by faith, & then
 it will be a word of power, of life and saluation: and this is the
 onely meanes to remember the word, and to beleeu truly the
 iudgements denounced against sinne and sinners, and promises
 pronounced for the true beleeuers. But incredulitie, is when we
 except the curses against sin as not pertaining to vs, and cannot
 apply the promises of the Gospell. This is the proper cause of
 all ignorance and obliuion; so that we must labour about all
 things for this true faith, to beleue the word, and then we shall
 well and easily remember it.

We must haue hearing hearts: besides these eares of the body, 4.
we must haue new eares pearced. We must haue our eares opened, to become listeners and pliable to the word, that when the Lord calls vs to do his wil; we may answer with *Dauid: I am ready P sal. 40. 6, 7. to do thy will, O God.*

Further, after we haue read or heard the word, we must practise that we heare, in performing true repentance, and laboring faithfully in our vocation: for as we see men of trades become cunning by the continuall practise of their trades: so if we practise true obedience in repentance and our vocation, we shall be skilfull in the word. It followeth. 5.

Which are written in the booke of this prophesie. The child of God must keepe and remember the whole word of God, yet it is his speciall duty to keepe these prophesies which are to come. So the Angell bids *Daniel* seale vp the booke of the Prophesie till the time come, that is, remember and keepe it diligently. So *Mathew 24. 15. When they shall see the abomination of desolation,* speaking of things to come, he would haue them to marke and remember what he saith, *Mat. 24. 25. Behold, I haue told you before:* where he shewes, that when any great things are to befall the Church, then we must in these be most carefull to remember them. *Dan. 12. 4.*

For the time is at hand. Here is a reason of the former words, *Blessed is he which readeth, &c.* Seeing the time of the accomplishing of this Prophesie is at hand, and must shortly be fulfilled, therefore those be blessed which reade and keepe this prophesie; and it is an answer to a secret obiection. For they might haue said, We need not reade this Prophesie, seeing it shall not be fulfilled in our dayes; but he addeth, *The time is at hand,* and so taketh that obiection away.

Now seeing these words were in the first verse, and here repeated againe, he would teach vs that they containe some waighty matter for vs to be considered, and to be earnestly thought of. Now *S. Iohn* addes these words for two causes: first, because the Church, though it cannot be ouertaken with deadly sleepe, yet it may slumber, and be cast into some beginnings of sleepe: as the five wise virgins, though they slept not so carelessly

as the other, yet they all slept, not a deadly sleepe, but a slumber: for in the Church there may be some remnants of security. *Cant.* 5. 2. The Church sleepes, but so as she alwayes listens as awaken, being in a light slumber. Now least the Church should be careless, sleeping and drowsie, the holy Ghost addes these words, *The time of the last iudgement is at hand.*

Secondly, he addes these words to confirme the Church, and all the true members of Christ against afflictions: seeing by these words he foretels them, that they be to last but a short time; the time of iudgement is at hand, the affliction cannot long endure. Then this should comfort those which suffer for Christ his sake.

vs. In this that Christ foretels the Church, that now in the last age the time is at hand; we must be assured that whatsoever befall the members of Christ, shall shortly befall them; temptations, afflictions, the crosse and calamity shall presently befall vs, the time of iudgement is at hand, it will presently befall vs. And if we had this confidence, that the last iudgement is at hand, it would make vs do all in good conscience, stay vs fro many sins; and the want of this is the cause of much mischief: for so the bad servant thinking his maister would defer his coming, he smites and beates his fellow seruants. And the old world liued in sinne, and would not beleue the flood should come, though they were foretold of it, till they were all swept away by water.

We then should lay this to our hearts: euer think the Lord is at the doore, he is presently to come to iudgement. And we ought the rather to thinke of this; for we haue had ease, peace, and the Gospell flourishing this 38 years with all temporall blessings. Now the state of the Church, is now peace and now trouble and persecution. Now then, seeing these crosses which must fall on the Church, they be to be done presently, we cannot but looke for affliction and persecution after so long peace and preaching.

vs. 4.

John to the seuen Churches in Asia, grace and peace, &c. In this fourth verse is the second part of this Chapter, which is the inscription of this booke; wherein is first the party which writes it, and dedicates it: secondly, the parties to who it is dedicated: first, the

the party which dedicates it, is *Iohn*: secondly, the parties to whom, the seuen Churches in Asia.

In the inscription are two parts. first, a dedication, secondly, a salutation, contained from the fourth till the ninth verse. In the dedication, there be first the party which dedicates it, secondly, the parties to whom it is dedicated. The party which dedicates it is *Iohn*, who here againe in this fourth verse repeates his name, yet so as he repeates no more but his bare name without any titles of commendation: he repeates it againe, to shew and certifie euery Reader of this booke, that he was without all doubt the true pen-man of the holy Ghost in writing this Reuelation. But though he repeate his name, yet he doth not adde any titles of honour, as he did in the first verse many titles of praise and commendation. This he doth to giue vs a true patterne of modesty and humility, which is, neuer to speake in our own causes to our owne praises, but onely in cases of necessity, when Gods glory may be aduanced, and the credit of our particular callings maintained. This *Paul* practised, who often humbles himselfe, and calls himselfe the least of all the Apostles, yea the chiefe of all sinners: yet when the credit of his Apostleship came into question, then he sets out himselfe, shewing he was a true Apostle, and about those which did falsly call themselves so. 2. Cor. 11. So may we, when the glory of God, or the credit of our particular callings be in question, set out our selues with titles of commendation.

The persons to whom he wrote, were the seuen Churches in Asia: concerning them, note two things, first, he calls them *Churches*, secondly, *in Asia*.

Why writes he to the Churches rather then to the Church, seeing there is but one true Church? *Ans.* The Church may be considered, first, as it is the whole company of the elect, and so it is but one: secondly, as it is parted and diuerly sundred into parts; as in one country there is one Church, or one part of the Church is in one city or towne, another part in some other. And there may be many Churches, seeing euery congregation professing the Gospell of Christ, is a Church, being a member of the true Catholicke Church: as the sea is but one, yet there be

many parts of the sea, which lying against other countries, are called by their names, as the English, French, Spanish, Italian sea. So the particular Churches in particular countries, townes and cities, be Churches, though not the Catholicke Church, but members of it. Note first, the matter of this booke concernes the Church, seeing it is a propheticall history concerning the estate of the Church, from the time of *Iohn* to the end: and therefore it is meet it should be dedicated to the Church. Secondly, it is dedicated to the Church, seeing the true members of the Catholicke Church be the pillars and ground of truth: not that their authority is above the word, but because they preserve the scriptures as a treasury from age to age. And they be pillars and grounds of truth, because they giue testimony to the truth of Gods word. 3. Because they publish the truth of Gods word, in and by the ordinary ministry of the word; and so the church being the pillar and ground of truth, it is fit this booke should be dedicated to it. Secondly, he writes it not to all Churches, but makes choise of these seuen Churches in Asia: first, because they were then most famous, as the Chapters following, and histories of the Church do shew. Secondly, he sayes not, to the Churches of Ierusalem and of the Iewes, but of Asia, to shew them that which was long before foretold was now fulfilled; namely, that the Gentiles according as the Prophets foretold, should be called: which now was verified, seeing the Gentiles dwelt in Asia.

vjs.

Seeing *Iohn* wrote and dedicated this booke to the Churches in Asia many yeares after Christ, & not to the Church of Rome: then we see that the Papists are deceiued, who would haue their Church the mother Church, and all other Churches must rely on theirs: but if that Church of Rome had bene the mother, and most famous, no doubt *Iohn* would haue dedicated it to her. But he doth dedicate it to the Churches in Asia, shewing they were then more famous then Rome.

The Salutation 2 Now followes the salutation, *Grace and peace &c.* Salutation is of two sorts, ciuill or religious: ciuill, as that which men vse ordinarily with one another: 2. religious, which is more peculiar and proper to the Church: and so it is here a religious salutation. And seeing the Apostles vse it commonly in all their Epistles,

it

may be called an Apostolicall salutation. They vsed this in all their Epistles, Grace and peace, &c. which they did, because their ministry was of grace and peace, and they made their salutation answerable to their ministry: for their Apostleship stood in these two, to preach the word, and to pray for the people, that they might haue grace & peace. And the apostles vse this phrase in manner of blessing, for when their ministry stood in two actions, in preaching and praying for the people, vnder the second action of praying, was contained this, to blesse the people: and so did the high Priests and Leuites; as also Christ he vsed this: so Ministers to shew their duty more fully, after they preach the word, they blesse the people. Num. 6. 24.
Iohn 20. 21.

Grace be with you. Most excellent words: and containe in them the summe and substance of the whole Gospell. *Grace* signifies two things, first, Gods fauour and good will, secondly, his graces. Here it signifies his fauour, because in this salutation grace is opposed to peace, which is a grace of God, so that it cannot be meant of a grace of God: then by it is meant his good will and fauour, whereby he accepts of vs for Christ his sake. S. Iohn begins with *Grace* first, and not with *Peace*, because grace is the ground of peace, and all blessings & graces of God. We must first be in Gods fauour, then we must looke to haue prosperitie and graces from God. Grace is the ground of all blessings, as of our election, vocation, redemption, iustification, sanctification, of faith, repentance, and perseuerance in faith and repentance: nay it is all in all in the matter of our saluation. For this cause he begins with it.

And peace. Peace is taken first for welfare and good successe in things of this world, by Gods blessing. Exod. 18. 7. *Moses* asks *Sethra* his father in law of his peace, that is, of his welfare; and so it is partly taken in this place.

Secondly, it is taken for that vnity and blessed concord we shall haue in the kingdome of God, and so it is especially taken here. And being thus taken, it hath sixe parts; first, when we haue peace with God, which is, when we stand in the fauour of God, reconciled to him in Christ Iesus. Secondly, when we haue peace with Gods Angels, in that they guard vs and cary vs

as a nurse doth her child in her armes, that we hurt not our feet at any stone: and when they reioyce at our good estate. *Psal.* 91.11.

The third is peace with a mans selfe, when his conscience will not accuse him, but excuse and cleare him; as when our conscience is walked in the blood of Christ, *Phil.* 4.7. this peace passeth all vnderstanding.

The fourth is peace with the church. So *Act.* 4.32. those which beleueed, were all of one mind and heart, had peace with each other, So *Esa.* 11.6. The wild beast and the Lion, the Lamb and the Cockatrice and the yong child shall lie together.

Fifthly, this peace & fauor of God, is with the enemies of God, so far as it is for the good of the Church, and the glory of God. So *Ioseph* had peace in *Pharaohs* house. So *Daniel* had peace with the Kings Eunuches: for though he was free when the children were cast into the ouen, yet he did not reuolt; but being fauoured, they saued him.

The sixth is peace with all Gods creatures, beasts, birds, all creatures in heauen and earth. *Ose.* 2.18. The Lord will make a couenant betweene vs and all his creatures. *Psal.* 91.13. The child of God he shall tread vpon the lion and serpent, and they shall not hurt him: for when a man is in Gods fauour, what creature dares to hurt him? nay al the creatures are ready and willing to serue him.

Grace and peace. As though he had said, first you must be in the fauour of God, you must haue vnity and reconciliation with and in Christ, and then this peace, welfare, prosperity in all good things as farre as is necessary, yea then concord and vnity with God and all his creatures will follow.

Ps.

Whereas the Apostle wishes them grace in the first place, he would teach vs that this Gods fauour is to be sought for about all things, yea in the first place. *Psal.* 4. 6. *Many say, Who will shew vs any good?* But *Daniel* he seekes this grace and fauour of God, *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance vpon me:* let me be in thy fauour. And often he sayes, the *Lord he is his portion*, inheritance, and his lot: shewing, to be in the loue and fauor of God, is to be preferred before all things in the world. So must we seeke

Psal. 119.57.

seeke first to be in Gods fauour, make that our chiefeft care, seeke it aboue all things: but we litle practise this, because we bring from our cradles naturall presumption, which perswades vs that we be in the fauour of God, that we haue his loue to vs. But we must cast off this naturall presumption, and take a new course; and the first step to come to grace, is to see that we want grace: we must see that we be lost sheepe: prodigall children in our selues, the very fire-brands of hell: and this, to see our owne want of grace, is the first step to grace. The second step, is to desire it when we see that we want it, to hunger and long for it. Thirdly, to lay hold on it, to apprehend this fauour and grace by true and liuely faith, to apply the promises of saluation by faith in Christ Iesus: and this is the last steppe to get this grace.

Secondly, in that he sets downe, first grace, secondly peace, here is the true order of seeking for things and blessings in this life. First, for grace and Gods fauour: secondly, for peace and welfare: not first peace and welfare, but first for grace. So Christ bids vs, first to seeke the kingdome of God, and the righteousnes thereof, and then when we are in Gods kingdome of grace, all things needfull shall be ministred to vs.

This discouers the bad practise of most men, who begin at a wrong end: first, with peace in their callings, to get honour, riches, pleasure or preferment, neuer seeking first for grace and Gods fauour: but if we would haue peace, we must first haue grace.

But men, if God blesse them in riches, health and wealth, they say, Oh, God loues me: but alas, we deceiue our selues; for we may haue peace, yet want grace: we may haue this welfare, health, wealth, libertie, and yet want grace: nay, the peace of the wicked is no blessing, but a curse. And though the Lord giue a man health, wealth, libertie, which be but common blessings, he may be out of his grace and fauour: seeing the Lord bestowes these common blessings on those which be his enemies. *Psal.* 73.12. But though the wicked haue all these common blessings, they be accursed. And though a man had grace, the fauour and true loue of God, and had no other health, wealth nor libertie,

yet he were most happy and blessed.

Frō him which is, was, &c. Here he sets down the cause efficient and the author of these two, *Grace* and *Peace*: the Author is God, distinguished into three persons, the *Father*, *Sonne*, and *holy Ghost*: the *Father* in these words, *which is, was, and is to come*: the *holy Ghost* is noted in these words, *And from the seven spirits*, which are before his throne: thirdly, the *Sonne* in the fifth verse.

S. Iohn in the first place describes the *Father* by his true nature, in these words, *Which is, was, and is to come*; in which he alludes to that, *Exo. 3. 14. 15.* where *Moses* demaunds of God, if the people should aske who sent him, what he should answer: the Lord tels him, say, *I am, Ehjeh, Iehouah*, hath sent me: where are two names to one end, namely, to expresse the nature of God. Now *S. Iohn* he expounds them here, where he saith, *He which is, which was, and is to come.*

Further, these two names, *Ehjeh, Iehouah*, be two such names as cannot be translated fully in our English tongue, but are more significant in their originall Hebrue tongue: for they import thus much; *Grace* and *peace* be from him which is in himselfe, and from himselfe, a most perfect and absolute substance, which was, and which is to come; a most absolute perfect simple substance and essence; so that he is a nature most simple, pure, and subsisting in and by himselfe, *1. Cor. 8. 4.* An idoll is not so, it is nothing in and of it selfe, but onely in mans braine: it hath no subsisting and being of it selfe by nature, but by mans art: and thus the Lord differs from all false gods, seeing he hath his being in and from himselfe, not of or by any other thing. None other hath this propertie but God.

2. By this we see the nature of all creatures, which is, that though they haue their subsisting and being (as mans body and soule) yet it is not from themselues, but from God: not taken out of his essence, for then they should be God. And the Lord hath no parts as we haue, but he makes all things out of himselfe of nothing.

Seeing then we haue all we haue of God, our bodies, soules and all we inioy, we must in lieu of recompence, in thankfulness

fulnesse and obedience, giue our selues, soules and bodies to his service, to do his will and pleasure.

The Lord is most absolute and eternall euery way, without beginning or ending. Angels and the soules of men, they be eternall, but not as absolutely: though they be eternall in that they shall neuer die, yet had they a beginning. Secondly, they are eternall, not absolutely, but by participation, for God made them eternall: but the Lord is most absolutely euery way eternall.

From him which is to come. That is, to iudgement, to iudge all his creatures, especially men and Angels. That God, which is, was, which hath his being of, in, and from himself, he shall come to iudgement. This must we reuember and thinke of, that he which is God of himselfe and by himselfe, which giues vs life and being, he shall iudge vs: and this will be a meanes to make vs do our dutie in conscience. But many men flatter themselves, saying: God will not come in my time to iudgement: but though the Lord come not to generall iudgement in this life, yet he will come in particular iudgement by death in this life. Thirdly, if we would alwayes remember this, it would bridle our liues, and make vs keepe a good conscience before God and all men. *Act. 16. 24.*

And from the seuen spirits which are before his throne.

Verse 4.

These words commonly are expounded of the Angels of God, which stand and minister vnto him: but it cannot be meant of them, for two causes. First, those which are here called seuen spirits, from these grace and peace come, but it cannot come from the holy Angels, which attend to minister before the Lord. Secondly, in this verse, which is a benediction or a salutation of *John* to the Church, the seuen spirits are set before Iesus Christ the second person of the Trinitie, which cannot be true of the Angels, who in no respect can be placed before Christ: therefore it cannot be vnderstood of the holy Angels. But for my part I vnderstand it thus, *And from the seuen spirits, &c.* that is, from the holy Ghost. This exposition is most agreeable to all the circumstances of the text, and the holy Ghost is called the seuen spirits: first, because, though he be one in substance, yet he

is seuen; that is, many in gifts and operations: and for this cause the spirit of God calls him selfe the seuen spirits. Secondly, he calls him so, because he sets downe the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, as he saw them in vision. Now *S. Iohn* saw the holy Ghost in forme of seuen lights in a vision, *Rev. 4. 5.*

Which are before the throne. This he speaks by comparison taken from earthly kings, which sitting in their thrones, do there shew their might and maiestie most. So *S. Iohn* he saw God the Father sitting in a throne by vision, and Christ at his right hand, and before the throne the holy Ghost. Hence it followes, not that he is inferiour to the Father, and to the Sonne: but by this comparison and kind of speech, *S. Iohn* sets out the office of the holy Ghost, which is, to be sent by the Father and Sonne to the Church, to enlighten the members thereof, and to sanctifie them.

Doct. 1. Seeing that he ascribes grace and peace from God the father, and also from the seuen spirits, that is, the holy Ghost: hence we note, the holy Ghost is very God; for from whom grace and peace proceeds, he is perfect and very God.

2. We learne, that we may direct our prayers to the holy Ghost, for to whom grace and peace is ascribed, to him we may direct our prayers, seeing he can giue grace. &c. but they be ascribed to him, and he can giue them, *ergo* we may pray to him for them.

There be some which doubt whether we may pray to the holy Ghost: but they may aswell doubt whether he be God or not: but they say we haue no example. *Ans.* It is false: for here we haue an example; for though this grace and peace, &c. be a blessing, yet in substance it is a prayer as though he had said, O Father, Sonne and holy Ghost, let thy grace and peace be vpon the Church.

3. *Which are before the throne of the Father.* Hence we note, the holy Ghost is a substance, and a person subsisting, not a quality, as some Heretikes hold, confessing the Godhead of the Father, of the Sonne, and denying the Godhead of the holy Ghost. But here we see, for the holy Ghost, he is a substance and person subsisting, standing before the throne of the Father, not a gift

or grace proceeding from God, but a person distinguished from the Father and the Sonne: the Father he sits on the throne, the Sonne is on his right hand, the holy Ghost distinguished from them both, stands before the throne.

And from Iesus Christ. That is, grace and peace from Iesus *Verf. 5.* Christ. Where Christ is ioyned to the Father and the holy Ghost, in bestowing grace and peace on his Church.

Ob, Why is Christ, the second person of the Trinitie, placed after the holy Ghost the third Person? *Ans.* For two causes. First, Christ is considered two wayes: first, as he is the Sonne of the Father: secondly, as he is the Mediator of the Church. Now as he is the Sonne of the Father, he is the second Person in Trinitie, and so before the holy Ghost in order. Secondly, as he is Mediator; and so he is after them both, the Father and the holy Ghost: *Esa. 61. 1. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, hath sent me to preach.* Where Christ is sent by the holy Ghost to preach, as he is Mediator, and so as he is sent, in that respect he is after the holy Ghost.

Secondly, he is placed after the holy Ghost, because the manner of them which pen the Scriptures, is to set them in the last place of whom they meane to speake last. So *Mat. 1.* he setting downe the genealogie of Christ from Abraham, though in all those there was none more excellent then Christ; yet he is in the last place because of order: the Euangelist meaning to speak and treat of him, he sets him in the last place, purposing still to continue his historie of the life and death of Christ. So here *S. Iohn* he placed Christ in the last place, because he purposed to continue his historie in speaking of the death and passion of Christ, and other things which concerne him.

Now what saith he of Christ? From this fift till the ninth verse he describes Christ, first, by his offices: secondly, by the execution of his offices. His offices are three: first, he is set out by his propheticall office in these words: *which is that faithfull witnesse:* secondly, by his prietly office: *the first begotten of the dead:* thirdly, by his kingly office: *and that Prince of the kings of the earth.*

First, his propheticall office. First, he is a witnesse. Secondly, *1. Office.* a faithfull witnesse. Thirdly, *that faithfull witnesse.* First, he is a

witnesse, *Esa. 55. 4. I gave him to be a witnesse to the nations*. In that he is called a witnesse, there are signified many duties of his prophetickall office: as first, to reueale the will of his Father: secondly, to certifie the Church of the certaintie of the same: and in these two stand his whole office prophetickall.

First, to reueale his Fathers will to the Church is his office: for there is none which knowes his Fathers will, but he which came from the bosome of the Father, and he hath declared it, *Ioh. 1. 18*. And he hath not onely declared his Fathers will since he came in the flesh: but from the beginning he reuealed the will and word of God. When the Lord rained fire on Sodome *Gen. 19. 24*, there Iehouah the Father rained downe, by Iehouah the Sonne. So when the couenant was made to our first parents, it was made in Christ the promised seed, It was renewed to Abraham and the Patriarkes from the Father by the Sonne, as appeared in the bush, where Iehouah appeared: but *1. Cor. 10.* there he is called Christ. The Prophets and the Apostles wrote as they were inspired by Christ, they were but his instruments to speake and write that he put into them by the holy Ghost. The matter, and the stile and phrase of the Scripture, all came from Christ. Nay, when any particular man comes to vnderstand the Scriptures, this is by the working of Christ: he opens their eyes. He gaue the disciples vnderstanding as they went to Emaus, to vnderstand the Scriptures.

Exod. 3.

Luk. 24.

2. *Dutie.*

Ioh. 15.

The second duty of Christ, is to certifie men of his Fathers will, and that in conscience of the certaintie of his Fathers will. This certification is generall or particular. When he certifieth men, that the word written or spoken by man out of the word, is the word of God, neither nature nor learning can do this, but it is proper to Christs Prophetickall office: and for this he saith to his disciples, he will send them *the comforter which shall leade them into all truth.*

Here we must know, first, by what meanes he assureth vs: secondly, the principall cause of this assurance. The meanes, is the word it selfe. The principall cause, is the operation of the holy Ghost.

1. *Point.*

By this, three points are resolued. First, the Papists aske, how
a man

a man can come to know, that the Scriptures read and taught be the word of God? *Ans.* We must here haue recourse to the word, and to the faithfull witnessse, and desire of him his spirit, and so we shall be able to discerne, and iudge of it: for no naturall man can do it, no naturall man can discerne the things of God: but he which is enlightened by the Spirit of God, he can.

Objection.
Answer.

Secondly, a man must haue Christ his testimonie of Scripture, which is the Scriptures themselues: for in them he setteth downe this testimonie of the Scriptures.

But if Christs testimonie be set downe of the Scriptures, why do not all men know it? *Question.*

Vnlesse a man haue a natural facultie of seeing, he cannot discerne the Sunne though it shine: so vnlesse a man haue grace from Christ to iudge of the Scriptures, he cannot iudge of the: but if any haue the spirit of discerning, then if he read and mark the phrased and manner of writing, the stile and authoritie of the Scriptures, he shall see then in euery line a testimonie of them giuen by Christ.

Answer.

How can a man know the true religion, seeing the Turke, Papist, Jew, & Protestant haue their religions, and dye in them? *3. Point. Question.*
Answer. I answer, for to know which is true of these, we must haue recourse to the faithfull witnessse Christ, and what he saith is true religion, that we must hold for true religion. Now Christ he giueth testimonie of them in the Scriptures, and the Scriptures be as a letter sent from heauen to the Church, shewing and testifying which is true religion: not that of the Jew, Turke, or Papist, but of the Christian.

Sundry men hold diuerse opinions in matters of religion, as the Jew, Turke, Papist, & Christian: which is the true opinion? how is it knowne? *3. Point. Question.*
Answer. *Ans.* Still we must haue recourse to the witnessse of truth, the faithfull witnessse, and Prophet of the Church: and he is the iudge of these cōtrouersies. Now in the Scriptures if we marke them, we shall see his iudgement, which of these is true. But if there be diuerse opinions of Scriptures, what must be iudge? In this diuersitie of opinions, yea of the Scriptures theselues, we must still haue recourse to the Scriptures: & if we note the circumstances, the manner of writing: if we conferre

Scripture with Scripture, we shall easily find out the true sense and meaning: for the Lord sets out in them his iudgment plainly and fully.

The second certificate is particular, belonging to the Prophetickall office of Christ: which is, to certifie men in particular, that the promise of the Gospell belongs to them, as to *Peter, John*, &c. that he is the child of God, and that euerlasting life belongs to any child in particular: and this is done especially by the word, not read, but preached, being ioyned with the working of the Spirit, *Rom. 8.* We haue the spirit of Christ, which testifies with our spirit we be the sonnes of God. Now if this be the dutie of Christ, to certifie men in particular, that euerlasting life belongs to me, or to any particular man, then their doctrine is damnable who deny this, seeing it is the proper office of the prophetickall office of Christ. And in this he differs from al other Prophets and Apostles which be witnesses: for they can witnesse onely outwardly to the eare, but he can speake and testifie to the conscience: neither can any of them certifie any man particularly, though their ministerie tend to that end.

Christ is not onely a witnesse, but a *faithfull witnesse*: first, because he testifies not his owne will, but his which sent him: namely, his Fathers. Secondly, he testifies all his Fathers will, neither adding nor detracting from it. Thirdly, because he teacheth it as he receiued it sincerely, in the same manner in which he receiued it, not altering, changing, or deprauing his Fathers will.

That faithfull witnesse. The Lord hath sundrie faithfull witnesses, as the Prophets, Apostles, the Church, nay, the Sunne and Moone, *Psal. 89. vers. 37.* but Christ alone is that faithfull witnes, whereby he is distinguished from all other witnesses: for he is aboue all other, his witnesse is authentickall, sufficient of it selfe, & needs no confirmation. The witnes of the Apostles and Prophets, be not authentickall and certaine, but as they consent with Christs witnesse. Secondly, he is that witnesse, because he is the Lord of that house whereof he giues witnesse, namely the Church, but the Apostles and Prophets are but seruants.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Christ his witnesse is inward, it assures and speakes to the conscience: but the wines of men, as of the Prophets and Apostles, is outward onely; it comes to the eares, it neuer binds and assures the conscience: so that for that prerogative he is above all witnesses, and here called, *THAT faithfull witnesse*.

1. Whereas Christ the Doctor and Prophet of the Church, is called a faithfull witnesse, we learne, that all Ministers must be faithfull witnesses: for every Minister of the Gospell when he preacheth out of Gods word, he is in the roome of Christ, speaketh that which Christ should speake, therefore he must be like Christ, a faithfull witnesse.
 2. Now that they may be faithful witnesses, they must deliuer the testimony of Christ about all other things, and before all testimonies of man, in the office of their ministry. So, it was meate and drinke to Christ to teach his Fathers will. So *Abraham* his eldest seruant shewed his fidelitie, in that he would not eate or drinke till he had done his maisters message, *Gen. 24. 33*. So the Ministers must haue care, first to teach the wil of God about all things: secondly, they must testifie all the will of God concerning matters of saluatiō. As among men, we count him a faithful witnes which testifies all the truth, and no more but the truth: so they be faithfull Ministers, which testifie the whole will of God in things belonging to saluation, neither adding nor detracting. So *Paul* cleared himselfe, that he was free from all mens blood, *Act. 10. 16, 27* seeing he deliuered the whole will of God, in matters necessary for saluation, and kept nothing backe.
 3. He must neither adde nor take away, much lesse in any case depraue the word of God: and this is the true marke of a faithfull witnesse.
- In the Church of Rome a man may heare things concerning morall vertues handled soundly: but come to faith and repentance, matters of saluation, they take away one part and adde another to the Scriptures: they hold the Creed in word, yet in deede they deny the same, as by their doctrine it will appeare.

4. The true witnesse must deliuer the testimony of Christ,

in that manner he receiues it: namely, in a spirituall manner, in a plaine easie manner, in a familiar kind of speech: that the conscience of euery hearer may be moued. When we seeke to obscure the word, we do corrupt the same: and as trades men and huxters, we cannot be content to declare the word in a plaine, easie, familiar speech, but as they set out their wares with sterching, blowing, spicing, &c. so we set a gloze on the word, and make merchandize of it. 2. Cor. 2. 17.

This is a common sinne in this age: for we teach the word but in an humane manner. Men speake and preach the word but onely to shew their owne wit, learning, reading and gifts: but he which deliuereth not the word in that maner he ought, and wherein he receiues it, he is a false witness.

Christ he is a faithfull witness, and *that faithfull witness*: then we see the damnable practise of most men now adayes, for they heare the word continually preached, and reade the same: yet the Prophet cries out, Who hath beleued our sayings? None feare the threatnings of the law, none beleue the promises of the Gospell. What an heauie and horrible thing is this, that we should not beleue the promises of saluation, nor feare the threats of the law for our sins: seeing it is the doctrine preached and confirmed by the testimonie of Christ Iesus, the true and faithfull witness of the Fathers. will to man? This is to make Christ a lyer, to make him a false Prophet, and giue him the lye.

Ita. 53. 1.

By the consideration of this, that Christ Iesus is the faithful witness, that the doctrine deliuered out of his word, is confirmed by his testimonie: must we take heed that we feare and tremble at the threatnes of the law, that we beleue assuredly the promises of the Gospell: for they which will not beleue, haue their portion in the lake of fire and brimstone, *Reuel. 21. 8.*

Againe, seeing Christ Iesus is that faithfull witness, which giueth testimonie to mens consciences in particular of their saluation, this teacheth vs to beleue the promises of the Gospell, that they belong to each of vs in particular, as to Iohn, Peter, &c. and euery true member of Christ: for he is the true and faithfull witness, he alone giueth testimonie to mens consciences. Now though it be against all sense, yet we must beleue him, seeing

seeing he is true: and if we do not, we make him a false witness, giving him the lie.

Then it is no presumption (as the Papists say) to beleue our election and saluation in particular: nay, it is an horrible sinne not to beleue it: seeing Christ a most faithfull witness, testifies the same to our consciences by his holy Spirit. Nay, for this end to perswade euery man in particular, he appointed his Sacraments, bread and wine in the Supper, and water in Baptisme, that euery one might particularly receiue the, & particularly be assured of the same. For in that he offers them, he doth, as if he should say, I offer you in them life euerlasting. Then to doubt of this, that we may assuredly perswade our selues in particular, of our owne saluation, is to call into question, whether Christ be a true witness, a true and faithfull Prophet or not.

And the first begotten of the dead. Here in these words is contained the second office of Christ: namely, his Priestly office.

The first begotten of the dead: He alludeth in these words to the estate of the families among the Iewes: for as among them, he which was first borne, and eldest of the familie, had many priuiledges and preheminences, as of the Lordshippe of the Priesthood, of double portion, &c. so Christ which is compared to the eldest and first borne, he hath his priuiledges: yea euen Christ crucified, he hath his prerogatiues among the dead, aboue all that are dead. So Paule calleth him the first and beginning of the dead: and after expounds it, that he might in all things haue the preheminance. *Colos. 1.18.*

The second priuiledge is, that Christ being dead, was the first which rose from death to life: for none rose from death to life before him.

Ob. Lazarus, Moses & Elias in the mount, they had their bodies restored the againe: yea *Lazarus* rose to life againe before Christ. *Answ.* *Moses* and *Elias* receiued their bodies againe, *Lazarus* also liued againe, but these returned againe to their former miserie; as *Lazarus* he rose from death to die againe: so *Moses* and *Elias* tooke to them their bodies againe, not to enter into eternall happinesse, but to their former miserie: but Christ he rose from death to eternall happinesse, and rose not

to die any more, but his resurrection is the first steppe to eternal life and felicitie.

*The second
priviledge.*

The second priviledge which he hath about all the dead, is, that he by his owne power, and by the vertue of his Godhead raised his manhood. But all that rise to life, saue Christ, they are raised by vertue of his resurrection, not by their owne power. None can raise themselves, but by the vertue of that mysticall union betweene Christ the head, and vs the members. For as the first fruites being offered to the Lord, they sanctified all the rest: so Christ Iesus the first fruites of the dead, did by his resurrection, sanctifie and make acceptable all our resurrections,

Vse.

In this is a notable comfort for all Gods children, against the immoderate feare of death: for if *Iohn* had said, Christ is the first borne among the liuing, it had bene a great comfort: for then had he shewed that we be his familie on earth; that the companie of his children on earth is his familie, and he is the head of them, he our elder brother. But in that he saith, the *first begotten of the dead*, here is an excellent comfort: for the Lord sheweth thereby, that he hath speciall regard euen of the dead of his familie: for the companie of his members which be dead they be his familie, and in this familie, Christ is numbred as the elder brother. And in that respect he hath a double right: first, of a King: secondly, of a Priest. Of a King, in making the dead to obey his voyce, and to rise from the dead at his commaundement. Secondly, of a Priest, to offer himselfe an acceptable sacrifice to his father: and also by his death to sanctifie and perfume the death of the godly, so that their death is to them no death. For as the first fruites sanctified the rest of the come, so Christ the first fruits of the dead, he sanctifieth the death of all his children: so that death sanctified by his death, is no curse to the godly, the graue is not a prison, but a pleasant chamber of rest.

*The third title
and office of
Christ.*

And Prince of the kings of the earth. Here is the third, namely, the kingly office of our Sauour Christ. He is called a Prince of the kings of the earth, in two respects: first, as he is God, the Sonne of God, and so King together with the Father and the holy Ghost, governing all things by his diuine power, being equall to them, Secondly, as he is Mediator, as he is God and
man.

man in two natures, he is called a Prince of kings. So *Mat. 28.*
All power is giuen me of the Father, not as he is God, but as he
 is God and man the Mediator, or God incarnate. So the Lord
 gaue him a name at which euery knee should bow, euen as he is Me- *Phil. 2.6.*
 diator. And of these two, I take it, he meaneth the second sense
 here, where he calls Christ a Prince of the kings of the earth, in
 regard as he is God and man, or God incarnate the Mediator.

Now Christ being a King, he must needes haue a kingdome,
 which cannot stand in the might and pollicie of man, as earthly
 kingdomes do: but it is spirituall, it stands in the heart and con-
 sciences of men: his lawes they bind the soule and conscience
 to obedience. And this is his priuiledge, which can be giuen to
 no creature, man or Angell, to rule and raigne spiritually in the
 heart and conscience.

This spirituall kingdome of Christ is exercisid in the consci-
 ences and soules of men by the word of Christ, not by dint of
 sword, or force of armes: but he is a King which carieth his
 sword in his mouth, euen his word, by which he rules and raigos
 in our hearts: he rules with the *rod of his mouth. Esa. 11.* that is,
 by his word, by which he speaketh to mens consciences.

Prince of the Kings of the earth. So is Christ in two respects.
 First, because he (and he alone) can and is able to giue lawes to
 bind the consciences of men, yea of the greatest Monarch in
 the world: none so high which is not subiect to his lawes. Sec-
 ondly, he is called King of the Princes of the earth, because he
 hath soueraigne power ouer all Kings and Potentates, to saue
 and to destroy: for not onely hath he power to make a law to
 bind their consciences, but also if they keepe it, to saue them; if
 they breake his law, he hath power to destroy them, be they
 what they may be. He hath the key of heauen to open and to
 shut, none can controule him. *Reuel. 1. 7.* He can if he will, leade
 them to life and saue them, or else leaue them to their owne
 mind, and so destroy them.

Seeing our Sauior Christ is a Prince of the greatest monarchs
 of the world, and is farre aboue them: we must then with all feare
 & trembling reuerence his high Maiestie. We reuerence Kings
 on earth, shewing great dutifulnesse to them: then what reue-

Christ, as their subiects be to them, they must therefore be guided and directed in all the matters of their kingdomes by the counsell of Christ: so *Dauid* saith, *Thy lawes, O Lord, are my counsellors.* *Psal.* *119.24.*

— If Christ be soueraigne King, and aboue all other Kings, then all other must plant and set vp in their kingdomes the religion of Christ, else how can they shew they be Christs subiects: then it followes, that they may not be of what religion they list. And this is shewed in the parable of the mariage; for when the supper was ready, he sent his seruants to compell them to his supper: which may be vnderstood of the magistrate, whose duty is to compell men to the true Religion and profession of the Gospell of Christ. *vse. 4.* *Luke 14.23.*

— Seeing Christ is King of Kings, and no man hath this privilege but he: hence we learne, that Kings on earth, they in their dominions are soueraigne kings, ouer all persons & causes, because as he is King of Kings absolutely, so they are vnder him kings, and haue supremacy in their kingdomes. Then we see the presumption and arrogancy of the Pope and sea of Rome, who would be supreme head of the whole earth, and King of all Kings, to put Christ out of his office, and sit in his roome ouer all at his pleasure. *vse 5.*

— Seeing Christ is King of all Kings, we must not be discouraged when we be called to suffer any affliction or crosse, seeing that though the tyrants and Kings of the earth rage and bend their force to hurt vs, yet we haue a King aboue them all, who can stay and bridle them, and if he please, confound and bruite them in peeces: they cannot do any thing but that which he permits them to do, for he rules and raignes in the midst of all these, where they are the thickest, and would do most malice, and can do to them as pleaseth him. *vse 6.*

Now followes the second part of Christs description by his execution of his offices, which consist in foure workes: the first contained in these words, *Unto him which loued vs*: the second in these, *Which washed vs in his blood*: the other two, in the two last verses which follow.

Which loued vs. That is, the Churches of Asia, and by pro-

portion all other Churches, being parts of the true Church.

Three degrees
of Christs loue.

1.

The loue of Christ hath three degrees: the first is called a generall loue, whereby he loues all his creatures, as they be his creatures: and this loue is common to all his creatures.

2.

The second degree is the loue of mankind, in that he was content to become a redeemer for mankind, not for any other creature, no not for the Angels, which fell as well as man.

3.

The third degree, which is most principall, is that whereby he loues his elect and chosen children, which is that loue whereby he accepts of them to life euerlasting.

Rom. 9. 13.

This third degree hath two parts: for it is taken first for the purpose of his decree to loue: secondly, for the action or declaration of his loue. For the first, *as I haue loued Iacob and hated Esau*: that is, I haue purposed to loue the one and hate the other. Secondly, for the declaration of his purpose to loue. Thirdly, for the action and for the declaration of his loue and speciall fauor in speciall benefits. 1. Ioh. 3. 1. *Behold what singular loue God hath shewed on vs*: noting the declaration of his purpose to loue vs, in giuing his son for vs. So in this verse is meant Gods special loue, or the declaration of his purpose to loue vs in speciall benefits.

Ps. 1.

Now whereas *S. Iohn* placeth this in the first place of all the benefites of Christ, *That he loued vs*, he would teach vs, that this loue is the very ground of mans redemption, the very cause of Gods liking and fauor to man. Then there is no foreseene faith: away with foreseene workes: for he loued vs first, and that alone is the cause and ground of our election and saluation.

Obiection.

But it may be objected: The loue of God, as also of man, respects the goodnesse of things loued: so we loue a thing because it is good, and when it is euill we hate it.

Answer.

There is great difference betwene the loue of the creature and the Creator. The creature loues the thing, because he seeth it is good: but God the Creator, he first loues the creature: and hence it comes, that it is good, because he loues it.

2. Whereas *S. Iohn* and all the Churches of Asia, as other true Churches, do beleue and are assured that Christ loues them, (for that *S. Iohn* taketh for graunted) this should moue all men to haue this care, to labour about all things to be rooted and

and grounded in loue, seeing he places that in the first place. This we do when we are assured in heart and conscience by the working of Gods spirit, that he loues vs in Christ: so that he which takes away the assurance of Gods loue to vs in Christ, takes away the very ground of our saluation.

Ephes. 3. 17.
18, 19.

Now that we may haue this loue of God, we must in all our duties to God and man, draw neare to God, keeping a good conscience before God & all men: and so if we loue God, he wil come to vs, stay and dwell in vs. And if we would haue his loue to be plentifully shed in our hearts, then we must draw neare to him by loue, and he will draw neare to vs: for he louing vs first, if we increase in that loue to him, then will he double his loue to vs.

Rom. 5. 5.

And washed vs from our sinnes in his blood. Here is the second benefit and action of Christ to his Church, which is, first the remission of sinnes: secondly, the mortification of sinnes.

Washed. Here he sheweth, that the sinnes of men are as filthy spots in their soules: and after he confesseth the vile estate of the Church and euery member thereof, in that he saith, they were so washed. For washing presupposeth filthinesse before, and a corrupted estate: and so should we by their example learne to consider our owne estate, how that our soules and bodies be spotted and defiled with sins originall and actuall. So did *David* Psal. 51. most sensibly and excellently feelee his owne wants, and see his miserable estate, when he desired the Lord to wash him thorowly: confessing thereby his soule and body was soule, stained and polluted with sinne: and addes *thoroughly*, not once and so inough, but wash me againe and againe, thoroughly till I be cleane, and cleanse me, rince, bathe, swill me in the blood of Christ, to be purged and cleansed from all my sinnes.

In which words he sheweth his exceeding feeling of his own miseries, how fouly he was defiled: so should we labour to see how the spots of sinne are deeply stucke in our soules; they be fast set, so that one washing will not serue, but we must be rince, bathed and cleansed by the blood of Christ: for it is not the hand of any man or Angell which can wash away these spots, nor any thing they can giue vs, but onely Christ Iesus, whose

finger alone dipped in his owne blood can wash away our spots of sinne.

The consideration whereof, should make vs consider our wretched estate, and often to repent vs of our sins, to take heed of sin, which stains vs so. We must labour to haue our hearts purged and cleansed by the blood of Christ; and till we haue them so purged, neither our faith, obedience, loue, or any thing we do is acceptable to God.

The first part of this benefit of Christ, contains the remission of our sinnes, the taking away of the punishment and the guilt due to them: the second part, is the mortification of sin.

Which hath washed vs from all, &c. He addeth these words, to shew that if any belecue truly, he hath pardon of all his sinnes, without any restraint or limitation of these or those sinnes.

Objection. *By his blood.* How can blood wash away filthinesse? nay, it rather defiles a man. *Ans.* This washing stands not in the substance of the blood, but in the merit thereof: for the blood of Christ shed is lost, and God knowes what is become of it, whatsoever the Papists say; but the merite of it washeth away sinnes.

Object. But why doth Christs blood, rather then any other mans blood, as *Peter, Iohn, &c.* *Ans.* Because that blood was the blood of God, (not of the Godhead) but of him who was both God and man; for these two natures being vnited together, make but one person: and so it may be called the blood of God, as *Paul* saith, *God redeemed vs by his blood*, that is Christ, God and man, God-man, or God incarnate: and so it being the blood of God, is more meritorious then the blood of any creature whatsoever. Besides I answer: Christ was appointed by God to be a publike person, to be suretie for all mankind: but no man can be so, to be in the roome of the whole company of mankind. Then damnable is the doctrine of the Papists, who hold, the blood of Martyrs can merit for other: for seeing they be but priuate men, they cannot profit any other.

By *blood* we must vnderstand the passion of Christ, being a part for the whole; and withall we must remember his fulfilling
of

of the law: for in his suffering he fulfilled the whole law, and in fulfilling the law he suffered, and these two cannot be severed: so that this containes the whole obedience of Christ, partly in suffering, partly in fulfilling the law.

S. *Iohn* addeth these words, and sets downe these two blessings, to draw men to loue and like this booke, to make them reade and take delight in it. Now all of vs will say, God loues me, and hath pardoned my sins in Christ: then we should shew our loue againe to him, in taking delight in hearing and reading the word of God, set downe in this or any other booke of Scripture. And if we perswade our selues God hath loued vs, we must then offer vp to him in signe of loue againe, our selues, soules and bodies, to serue him, to do him obedience, *Rom. 12.* in regard of recompence to his mercies and loue shed out and shewed vnto vs.

And made vs Kings and Priests to God and his Father, euen his Father. In these words is set downe the third action, worke and benefite of Christ bestowed on his Church: he hath made euery true member of it a *King* and a *Priest*. Better to vnderstand these words, we must consider in them foure points: first, the dignitie and excellency of all true beleeuers and members of Christ, *Kings* and *Priests*. Secondly, when they be made, namely, *hath made*, speaking in the time past: noting that true beleeuers are *Kings* and *Priests*. Thirdly, the maner how, we are not created such, neither borne to be such, but he hath *made* vs such. Fourthly, to whom, *to God, euen the father*. First, our dignitie, and the excellency of all true beleeuers and members of Christ, hath two heads: first, *Kings*: secondly, *Priests*.

They are called kings, not in regard of an earthly kingdome: for the condition of most beleeuers on earth is base; but in regard of a spirituall kingdome, and in respect of the kingdome of heauen: for the Lord he giues them this title and interest to be Kings, to haue right to the kingdome of heauen in Christ. So our Sauior Christ speaks to his Disciples: *Feare not little flock, it is your Fathers pleasure to giue you the kingdome.* The members of Christ are said to haue interest and title to the kingdome of heauen, in these respects: first, because by Christ they be

Lords and conquerors of all these enemies, *ſin*, Satan, the world, death, hell, and our owne flesh. Secondly, because in and by Christ they are partakers of the kingdome of heauen, they haue interest into it, and right to the kingdome of happinesse: for they receiue of Christ grace for grace, glory for glory, felicitie and happinesse, for glory, happinesse and felicitie. Thirdly, because they be made Lords of all creatures (except good Angels and the Church). 1. Cor. 3. 21. *God is all in all to them*: all things are theirs, they Gods; and we haue interest to all his creatures in beauen and earth by Christ.

Ob. But if Christ be King and al his mēbers, how do they differ? *Ans.* In two points: first, Christ he is the sonne of God by nature, therefore a King by nature, and so his inheritance belongs to him by nature; but the members of Christ are the sonnes of God by adoption in his Son, so that our right to that kingdome is not by nature but by adoption. Secondly, Christ he is King ouer all creatures, whatsoeuer, ouer the Angels and the Church, and he is absolute King ouer all, and hath his regiment in the hearts and consciences of men, and can by his word bind them: but his members they be not vniuersall kings, for they haue not superioritie aboue good Angels and the Church, neither are they absolute kings as he is: neither by themselves, but by Christ Iesus, and as they participate with Christ in his kingdome.

The second part of our dignitie stands in this, that we be *Priests*: in that we be consecrated and set apart by Christ to the worship and seruice of God here in this life, to serue him in spirit and truth, and in the life to come, eternally to serue and praise him.

Christ he is Priest, so are we, but yet there is difference. First, Christ he is an externall and reall Priest of the new Testament, which offers vp a true, reall and externall sacrifice to God the Father for vs: we are not reall and externall Priests, but spirituall, offering vp spirituall sacrifice. And Christ hath this priuledge, to offer vp a reall, corporall and substantial sacrifice in the new testament; we do not so. When any member of Christ giues an almes, he offers a sacrifice to God, not a corporall sacrifice, but

but spirituall euery way. Againe, note this, that our Sauiour Christ he is a perfect Priest, and offers vp a perfect sacrifice; but we being imperfect, do offer vp an imperfect sacrifice, tainted and blemished with sinne, but accepted as perfect for the worthinesse of Christs sacrifice.

Secondly, we be Kings and Priests in this life: for, as in the entrance into an earthly kingdome there be degrees, as first, to giue one title to it: secondly, to giue him possession of it, which is more then to giue one title onely: so Gods children they haue the right giuen them of the kingdome of heauen in this life: and as in the giuing of possession of a kingdome, there be two degrees: first, the beginning of the possession: secondly, the full enioying and perfect possessio: so we haue the beginning of the possession of the kingdome of heauen in this life: which stands in righteousnesse, ioy and peace: and they which haue these, haue the kingdome of God begun in them. Rom. 14. 17.

The second part and degree is after this life, which is the full fruition and possession of the kingdome of heauen: but in all the true members of Christ it is begunne here, and accomplished there. And as we be kings in this world, so we must be Priestes too, in offering spirituall sacrifice to God, and dedicating and consecrating our selues to his seruice.

Haith made vs. True beleeuers be Kings and Priests, not by nature, neither borne such, nor by creation, or birth, or bloud are they such, or by any other priuiledge they haue fro mā. How then? As earthly Kings and Priests were made in the old Testament, so are spirituall Kings and Priests in the new: the King was elected and ordained by a solemne calling: so the Priest by a solemne election: so are the Kings and Priests which be spirituall, by a diuine calling. In which calling, note two things. First, Christ giueth his members right to his owne kingdome, to be Kings and Priests; yet not so, that they can execute the regiment sustained by Christ, and do the office of a King and Priest as it is done by Christ, but because they belong to them in part, and they haue the benefite of them both redounding to them wholly.

And this right they haue, is brought to passe in the couenant.

of grace. For the Lord in it promiseth, that he for his part will giue to the true beleeuers in Christ Iesus, his Sonne with all his benefits, as he giues them this, to be kings and priests. For euery thing which belögs to Christ as he is head of the Church, belongs to his seruants as members, and he imparts it to them in some sort.

Secondly, in the appointing of kings, they must be annointed, so must we be annointed, *Psal. 45.* Christ was annointed about his fellowes: but yet his members they are also annointed: he in greater measure, his members in lesse measure, yet by the same oyle with him, which is the vnction of the holy Ghost. *We haue receiued the annointing of Christ. 1. Iohn 2. 7.* And the Lord he bids the wicked not to touch his annointed, meaning not onely his seruants, *Abraham, Isaac,* and the Patriarkes, but his true members. We haue the same spirit Christ had in his manhood, though not in the same measure. And the Lord he giues vs these gifts of the spirit signified by this oyle, to this end, that we may be fit kings & priests. So that first he giues vs right to a kingdome: and then, he giues vs gifts to discharge our dutie.

4. To whom hath he made vs kings and priests? *to God, and the Father, euen his Father.* Now men might haue said: If all his members be kings, then all may liue as they list. But he addeth, they be kings, but to God: shewing, that the interest they haue giuen to them to the kingdome of heauen, it is giuen the, that they may be kings and priests to Gods glorie, to his worship and seruice, and to shew, that all the interest belongs to God absolutely, to vs by him in Christ.

Lastly, he addeth God and his *Father*, which expounds the former word *God*, for it is not taken for his nature absolutely, but for the first Person, God euen his Father. Which sheweth, that they must not liue as they list: for they be made kings to the honour and seruice of God the Father, who is here named alone, not because he is aboue the Sonne and holy Ghost, for they be equall; but because he is the first person in order, and the fountaine of the Deitie: from it, it is deriued to the Son and holy Ghost.

Now

Now after the meaning of the words, followe the vſes. First, whereas all the true members of Chriſt be kings and prieſts in this life, we are taught how we muſt carie our ſelues: namely, as enemies to them which be of the kingdome of Satan, ſinne, the world and the fleſh: we muſt be deadly and ſworne enemies to them, we muſt haue no concord nor amitie with them. For if we be kings of the kingdome of grace, then we muſt be enemies to them which belong to the kingdome of darkneſſe: there muſt be no fellowſhip between light and darkneſſe. Now that we may ſo carie our ſelues as enemies, we muſt firſt haue care to keepe guard to defend our ſelues as kings againſt all our enemies, ſinne, Satan, our owne fleſh, and the inticements of the world. As Kings proteſt their kingdomes, ſo muſt we ſtand on our guard, defend our ſoules and bodies, and euery facultie and part of them, our wils, affections, thoughts and inclinations, 1. *Ioh. 5. 18. He which is borne of God keepeth himſelfe* (as with watch and ward) *that ſinne or Satan touch him not.* Ephes. 5. 6.

2 We muſt make war and enter combat againſt Satan, ſinne, our owne fleſh, all our ſpirituall enemies, the corruptions of our nature, and all the inticements of the world. We muſt make no truce with them, becauſe they will neuer be reconciled, ſo long as we haue intereſt into the kingdome of heauen.

3 We muſt labour to kill and deſtroy theſe our enemies, as much as poſſibly we can, by that power we haue from Chriſt our head: we muſt kill and crucifie the corruption of our owne hearts, that is, our owne finnes. We muſt like a valiant king, ſeek to haue the bloud of theſe enemies, and ſeek to conquer and vanquiſh Satan, his power and might, the world and our owne corruption.

4 If we be kings in this life, we muſt become Lords and rule Vſe. 2. ouer our ſelues: our ſoules and bodies muſt be brought into ſubiection and order: for in this, that we be kings of our ſelues, we ſhew eſpecially that we be kings in this life. We muſt not haue rule of the whole world, but be ruling and maſtering our owne corruptions and affections, bringing them into ſubiection and order: herein ſtands our kingdome in this world.

If a man were Prince ouer the whole earth, and yet could not rule himselfe, he were but a poore Prince, nay he were no Prince indeed: but though a man had not so much as a foote of ground in this world, and could rule and maister himselfe, his thoughts and affections, this man were a valiant king.

2.

1. Cor. 6. 2.

Seeing we be kings, we must do the duty of Iudges, for kings they be as absolute Iudges, and they must execute iudgement. In the day of iudgement we shall be iudges, but we must be iudges in this world, and we must not iudge other men, but we must be our owne iudges. Wherefore as iudges summon, arraigne, condemne, &c. so must we summon and arraigne, yea iudge and examine our selues, call our selues to account, and as guilty persons condemne our selues, acknowledging we be worthy to be cast into eternal damnation with the Diuell and his Angels: and withall pleade for pardon, approach to the throne of grace and forgiuenesse: and in these we shew our selues vpriight iudges, and and by this meanes we shall be freed from the iudgement to come.

1. Cor. 10. 31.

3.

If we be kings by Christ, we must cary our selues as kings, couragiously & constantly in the afflictions and miseries which we shall suffer for Christs sake: for herein stands the royalty of a king, that he beares couragiously and constantly all the troubles which befall him: so must we in the afflictions and troubles of this life which we suffer for Christ, shew our selues, in suffering them, to be kings and conquerors.

4.

Seeing we be spirituall kings, we must aboute all things labor and seek to haue that our right and heritance, to be possessors of our kingdome. Must we so? then we must not haue our hearts glued and fast tied to the things of this world: but we must so vse this world, as though we vsed it not. If a King should lay downe his crowne, and go and become a shepheard, or of some manuell trade, all men would maruell at it: so when we fasten our selues to these worldly things, we do as it were cast aside our kingly crowne, and abase our selues. But we must euer haue one foote fixed in heauen, struiuing to come to our inheritance there.

5.

Seeing all the true members of Christ be kings and priests,
this

this should be an inducement to all backward persons, to moue them and stirre them forward to christian religion, and not to account of it as precisenesse, seeing that by it we come to haue right and interest to the kingdome of heauen, to be Lords of all creatures. For why should we not esteeme of the Gospell as a most precious iewell, seeing that we which are vassalles of Satan and fire-brands of hell (as all men are by nature) become the members of Christ, yea Kings and Priests to God? And seeing this is effected by the ministry of the Gospell, this should moue vs to embrace it, to loue and like it, seeing it brings vs such an excellent benefit, and not to misname it as we do, by reprochfull termes. Yea verily, the consideration of this, should make the Ministers of the word to take all paines to preach the word, seeing by it they make men to become of vassalles of Satan the true members of Christ, and heires of the kingdome of heauen. In this world for a man to consecrate and establish one in a kingdome, it is a thing of great honour: is it not of greater honour, to consecrate one to become king of heauen and earth, to be heire of the kingdome of heauen? Now that this is done in the ministry of the Gospell, when by the word preached we are conuer- ted, made to beleue in Christ, and to repent of our sinnes: this I say should stirre and pricke forward the Ministers of the word, to labour to win men to Christ, and to make them kings and priests to God his father.

There also is matter of comfort to the godly: for seeing they be Kings and Priestes in the kingdome of Christ, if a man be in the crosse and affliction, which is a great grieve, yet let him know to his comfort, that though he be so handled, & it appeareth not what he shal be, yet he is a king, and that he shall be and is heire to the kingdome of heauen. If a man be in sicknesse, he must consider it is but Gods messenger to call him out of this world, to the possession of a kingdome. If a man be in the trouble and vexation of mind, and of his owne conscience: if he be tormented fearefully with his sins, yet he must be content, the Lord will giue him a happy issue; he must know he is a king, and therefore shall one day haue conquest ouer sin, Satan and his owne corruption, yea ouer all his enemies whatsoeuer. If a man be in the

heat of persecution, so that he is turmoiled and tossed from post to pillar, then flesh and blood cannot brooke it, yet he is a king: though he in perfection be killed and put to death, euen then let him consider he is a most valiant conquerour. *Rem. 8. 37.* In the pang of death when nature must needs be dissolued, and soule and body separated, then we must remember that we be kings in Christ, and so we shall not feare death, but know it is but a way and easie passage to the full possession of our kingdom. Thus much in that we are kings.

Uses that we
are Priests.

1.

In that all the members of Christ be priests, not earthly but spiritual, and offer to God spirituall sacrifices: first, we are hence bound by this our calling, to teach and instruct one another: for the office of the Priest in the old Testament, was to instruct the people, *The Priests lips must keepe knowledge, Mal. 2. 7.* So must we be teachers of others, *Col. 3. 18.* We all ought to be able to teach the will of God, that so the Gospell of Christ may be spread abroad. And as this belongs to al men, so especially to gouernors, they must especially shew themselves priests to their charges. *Abraham* did it, *Gen. 18.* *Dauid* did it, *Pro. 4.* and *Bathsheba* did it, *Prouer. 31.* and all must do it, that desire an holy generation to succeed after them. We teach other things, why not Religion?

Use 2.

1. *Tim. 2. 1.*

Ephes. 6. 18.

2 Seeing we be priests, we must pray for others, not onely for our selues but for all men, especially the members of Christ, The Priest in the old Testament must pray and make request, not onely for himselfe alone, but for the people also. *Moses* is commended for prayer, especially when he prayed for the Israelites, and stood before the Lord in the gap. *Exod. 32.* *Eliab* is called the horseman and chariots of Israel: and *Hezekiah* beseecheth the Lord to be good to his people. And so when any man in the word is commended for prayer, it is for that he prayed for the people. So did *Dauid* in the Psalmes. So did Christ make this his speciall duty. *Iohn 17.*

2. *King. 3. 12.*

2. *Chro. 30. 18.*

Use 3.

We must offer spirituall sacrifice to God, that is, dedicate our selues, our soules and bodies, and all that is in vs, our wit, learning, knowledge, or any gift of body or mind, we must consecrate it to Gods seruice. That we may do all this to his glory,
we

we must look that all we take in hand be begun in faith, do proceed from a good heart, and be directed to a good end, to Gods glory principally: and if we do it in faith and obedience, then it will please him.

We must be ful of blessings; we may haue nothing to do with *Vse 4.* cursed speaking. As the Priests in the old Testament, their duty was to blesse the people: so we must speake nothing but blessed and gracious speeches, take heed of all cursed speaking, of swearing and forswearing: we must be blessed and gracious speakers to all men, friend, fo, or any.

We must haue God our portion: for the Leuites had no portion in the land of Canaan, but dwelt in tents, and the Lord was their portion. So we being Priests to God, we must be content with any estate in this world, for God is our portion: we must not seeke too much to haue any inheritance on earth, for Gods fauour in Christ that is our portion, and this wil suffice. *Vse 5. Deut. 10. 19. Psal. 119. 57.*

To him be glory. In these words is a praising and thanksgiuing to God, for the three former benefits of Christ bestowed on the Church.

In that S. Iohn before he come to the end of his description of Christ should interrtupt himselfe, to giue God thanks for his benefits: we see that the consideration of Gods benefits bestowed on vs, should be a meanes to stirre vs vp to praise the Lord: we should be caried away with this affection of thanksgiuing, as S. Iohn was. And in these words of this holy man we do see what is the true forme of giuing thanks to God, namely, to giue him and ascribe to him, all glory, power, and absolute dominion for euermore. But alas it is too too manifest, that mans corrupt nature will not do this, but denieth it, and taking this from God, bestoweth it on creatures, yea on our own selues. And it is a matter of grace, to know this, and to confesse that all glory and dominion belongs to God, and to giue him his due. So Christ he teacheth vs to ascribe all power, glory, might and dominion to God, when we say in the Lords prayer, *For thine is the kingdome, power and glory:* that is, it is due to thee O Lord, not to any creature whatsoeuer. *Vse 1. Vse 2.*

Amen. So be it, let it be so, that thou mayst haue all glory and

dominion, he addes this, to shew his seruent desire of Gods glorie: and therefore he doubles and repeates it: for he had said that before, but not content with it, he sheweth his seruencie, and repeates the same againe: so should we not freeze or be cold in our desire of Gods glorie, but be seruent and earnest, doubling and repeating the same.

Vers. 7.

Behold he comes in the cloudes, &c. In the fifth and sixth verses are contained a large description of Christ, partly by his offices: partly, by the execution of his offices, which are these. First, he is a faithfull witnesse. Secondly, he is the first begotten of the dead. Thirdly, he is Prince of the kings of the earth. Secondly, the execution of his offices, which stands in foure actions: first, he loueth the Church: secondly, he washeth away the spots of it in his blood: thirdly, made vs kings and priests to God the Father: and of these three actions in the former verses. The fourth action, is his second coming to iudgement, to iudge both quicke and dead: In this seventh verse is a narration, or large declaration of the second coming of Christ to iudgement.

In the words consider first this note of attention: *Behold*: secondly, *S. Iohn* propounds Christ his coming it self: thirdly, the maner of it, *in the cloudes*: and that is amplified, that it shall be open, *euery eye shall see it*: fourthly, the effect of his coming, *all tribes of the earth shall waile*. *S. Iohn* concludes it with two notes of asseueration: *Euen so, Amen*, to confirme the second coming of Christ to all people.

Behold. First, *S. Iohn* he beginneth with a note of attention, *behold*. The spirit of God is accustomed, when any thing especially is worth our marking, to prefixe before it this note of attention *Behold*; or such like. Then this teacheth vs one speciall dutie, which is, often and euery day earnestly and seriously to consider of the second coming of Christ to iudgement. The which consideration is a speciall meanes to beginne and to continue the conuersion of a sinner. So *Mat. 3. 7.* when the Scribes and Pharisees, obdurate enemies, came to the baptisme of *S. Iohn*, he vseth this as a meanes to make them to turne and beleue in Christ, saying: *O generation of vipers, who hath forewarned you, that you should flee from the vengeance to come?* So *Act. 3.*

Mat. 3. 7.

19. Peter useth this argument, to bring the Iewes to repentance: because the day of refreshing is at hand. *Act. 17. 30. 31.* Paul perswades the Athenians to repentance, because there is a day of iudgement appointed, &c. Now all these are to winne men to repentance, by the consideration of this one point, euen the day of iudgement; and this makes *Iohn* to say, *Behold.*

Secondly, this word may serue to strike our hearts with a feare and reuerence of Christ, when we consider that he shall come to iudgement. So often as we consider of his coming, so often we should haue our hearts liuely touched with awe and reuerence to him. We stand in awe and reuerence to Magistrates, when we consider that they haue authoritie to attach, apprehend, and to bring vs to. their Courts and assizes: how much more should this worke an awe and reuerence, when we consider that Christ Iesus shall come and apprehend, and attach each of vs before his barre of iudgement?

Secondly, he propounds the coming of Christ himselfe. *He comes:* that is, Christ shall descend from the highest heauen in his manhood, to that place where the cloudes be, to the earth locally. In that he saith not, *shall come*, but in the present time, *he comes:* first, he sheweth it is a thing not farre off, but present: secondly, that it is certain, euen as though he now came: thirdly, he wold haue vs consider of the coming of Christ, not as a thing to come farre off, but present. This *S. Iohn* learned, and so shold we by his example learne, that it is present, and perswade our selues so: and therefore we should often thinke and consider of the coming of Christ, seeing it is of so great vse. Hence then our dutie is, to do that every day, which we would do in the day of iudgement: seeing it is alwaies present, we must do, think, and speake that which we would do that day. He which can do so, he is an happie man.

Now that a man may come to do this, we must daily consider of that coming of Christ, not as a thing to be delayed or farre off, but as a thing present: we must every day call our selues to a reckoning and accompt, perswade our selues this may be the last day, and so to carie our selues every day, as we would in the last day. Now if we were so perswaded, then we should see

lesse wickednesses in our life, we would repent, and seeke to be reconciled to God in Christ, we should be more faithfull, & see more grace daily in our liues. And the cause of the want of faith and repentance, and of grace, it is the want of this perswasion, that we should carie our selues euery day, as we would in the last day, euen in faith and repentance.

Doct. inc.

In that he saith, *He cometh*: Hence we gather, he is absent in bodily presence in regard of his manhood, he is not here, but in heauen till the day of iudgement: for if Christ were alwaies bodily present, he could not be said to come, but onely to manifest himselfe, being before present. Then the opinion of the Papists, which hold the bodie of Christ is present in or about the bread of the Sacrament, is most false and friuolous.

*The third point
the manner.*

He proceedeth and setteth out the manner of Christs coming, in two things: first, that he comes in the cloudes: secondly, that his coming is open and visible to euery eye.

Psal. 18. & 97.

With cloudes. Here *S. Iohn* speaketh after the manner of the auncient Prophets, who to set out God in his maiestie and glorie, say, he comes with cloudes, rides on the wings of the wind: as though he had said, he comes in exceeding maiestie and glorie. These words are added, to make a distinction betwene the first and second coming of Christ. His first coming was in humilitie, borne of a poore virgin, entertained in a stable and in an Inne: but his second coming is with glorie, maiestie and dominion in the cloudes. And the reason is, because he came first to be a redemption, and a Sauour, and therefore in the state of a seruant: but his second coming is, to be a iudge of all men, yea of his enemies, and therefore in this coming, he cometh with all might, maiestie, and glorie.

v. 2.

The vse of this consideration is set downe in the 97. Psalm: to make the very mountaines to tremble, to confound the wicked and vngodly, and to comfort the godly in that day.

Secondly, it is not secret, but in open appearance, *euery eye shall see him*: he shall come in maiestie and glorie, not secretly, but in visible shew to all the world: all men shall see him with their owne eyes, all I say which were since the world began to his coming.

In

In these words he sets downe three points: first, that all men shal see him: secondly, that all men being raised againe, shal haue life and motion, and their senses restored to them as before they died: thirdly, that all men, none excepted, shall come and stand before the tribunall seate of Christ.

This is a comfort to Gods children, in that they being dead & rotten in their graues, shall rise, and receiue their life and motio, and see Christ their Sauour and Iudge of all men. If a man should lie downe to sleepe, and be told that when he rose he should see his dead father and mother, or his dearest friends: this would be a notable comfort to him, that so he should inioy them againe: but this should be a farre greater comfort to vs, that we which lie dead and rotten in the graue, shall be raised, and enioy not our parents and friends, but Christ Iesus the sonne of God, which is our frind aboue all friends, who shall giue vs not onely life and motion, but eternall life with his owne maiestie: This was *Iobs* comfort, that though he died, yet he beleued he should see his redeemer with his eyes: and this should be our comfort against the feare of death and the last iudgement. *Iob 19.*

It shall be a terror to the wicked, & to all impenitent sinners, *vs 2.* who shall (wil they nil they) be brought to the barre of Christs iudgement seate, and then looke on him who is their Iudge, whom they had in their life contemned. And this consideration may serue to moue vs to repentance, which haue not begun to repent, and to labor to becom the members of Christ. We think when we die all is done, there is no harme to follow: but though we lie rotting in our graues a thousand or two thousand yeares, yet we shall rise: and if we repented not, we shall heare the sentence of condemnation, and looke vpon our Iudge with our owne eyes. Then it is best for vs now in the time of grace while we liue here, to prepare, that we need not feare to come to appeare and behold this Iudge. No doubt if we were perswaded that we should thus appeare, it would moue vs to repent.

Euery eye shall see him. Then here we see, that all men with their owne eyes shall looke on him, and those who wanted them in this life, shall haue them restored. It is graunted of all Diuines

that the elect haue all their senses and other defects restored: and it is to be added, that the wicked too they shal haue all their powers, senses and faculties of soule and body restored, the deafe shall heare, the blind shall see this Iudge: but this can be no glory to them, seeing it is to increase their punishment: for the more senses they haue, they haue the more punishment, because we iudge of things by sense.

Euen of those which pierced him. This is added, first to shew that we shal be freed. No power or wisdom of any man or monarch can free vs from appearing: for if any could escape, then the Iewes and Gentiles who prouailed most against Christ, in that they put him to death: but none of these can escape his iudgement, for euen they which pierced him, they shall see this Iudge, & be summoned before his maiestie: for though they had power to kill him, yet none of them shall haue power to absent themselves from before his barre.

2 To shew the case of all wicked men, namely, that such wo and misery befalls them as they neuer dreamed of. The Iewes and Gentiles they crucified Christ, and put him to a temporall death, but they neuer dreamed he should condemne them to eternall death.

3 To shew the rufull and wofull estate of all impenitent sinners: for these men shall haue their greatest enemy to be their iudge, who will shew rigour vpon them, and iustice without all mercy: and this is meant not only of the Iew which pierced him, but of all impenitent sinners, because all such do by their sins, as swords and speares wound him at the heart, as the souldiers did. These be as bad as the Iewes which pierced Christ: as *Judas* which betrayed Christ, & as the souldiers which goared his sides.

Out of these words some gather, that the body of Christ hath still the wounds and scarres which here he had giuen him, the print of the nailes in his hands and in his feete, and that these shall be seene in Christ at the last day, and say, that it is no infirmite to Christ to haue these, but rather an increase of his glory: but this cannot be gathered hence: for though it be said, They shall see him whom they pierced, yet not as he was pierced.

And

And because they shall see him, shall they see his wounds? Many shall see Kings and Queenes whom they crowned in this world, *ergo* as Kings and Queenes? So we shall see our fathers & mothers, therefore as fathers and mothers? so many shall see Christ therefore as he was wounded and pierced? It is no good collection nor opinion.

And all the tribes of the earth shall waile for him. That is, before or ouer him; Here is the fruit and effect of his comming, especially in the wicked.

All the tribes of the earth. S. Iohn he speakes here of the world, as it was in the condition and diuision of the land of Canaan: for before that time it was not diuided into tribes. So Math. 25. setteth out the iudgement of the whole world, by the separation of the sheep from the goates: noting that they which repented not, of what tribe soeuer, of what estate or condition, shall waile and mourne.

And he addes a reason of this, *for him, before him, or ouer him*: that is, they shal waile and lament with exceeding lamentation, because they beleueed not his word, but contemned his doctrine, and therefore now they want all helpe to free them from the punishment of their vnbeleefe, and contempt of the Gospell.

If they shall mourne because they did not belecue and receiue the doctrine of Christ, and for that haue no way to escape, then it is our dutie to labour about all things to be reconciled to God in Christ, to get our sinnes pardoned, to belecue and embrace the word of God: for vnlesse we belecue, and be reconciled when the last day comes, there is no hope of helpe, no way to escape, no time of grace to repent. If the doore be once shut, we must stand without, there is nothing then but horror of conscience for vs: it will be a day to vs to make our eyes start out of our heads, a day of all woe and misery. Then it is great wisdom so to spend the time of grace, in this life especially, that we may get the pardon of our sins, reconciliation with God in Christ, to receiue and beleue his will and word: which if we do, we shall haue no cause at all to waile and mourne, but be glad, and reioyce. Then we must take heed the Diuell steale not out of our

hearts this one lesson, which is most necessary, which he will most labour for to do.

See what an euill conscience is: it lieth asleepe here, while a man liues it neuer troubleth him, but in this last day when he shall see his Iudge with his eyes, then it wil stirre, it wil torment him, it will attatch, accuse and condemne him, it will lay to his charge his sinnes, his contempt of Christ and his word, his vnbeleefe in the time of grace, it will be as a thousand witnesses to condemne him. This should cause all men to labour to get a good conscience, washed and purged in the blood of Christ, which will not lay to our charge any one sinne, but assure vs we be in the fauour of God, which will not make vs feare, but looke vp to our redeemer, and to reioyce in him. We must take heed when our conscience lieth asleepe and accuseth not, no not at death, for it will then deceiue vs: but search and examine our hearts and consciences, and seeke to haue them washed and bathed in the blood of Christ.

Lastly he confirmeth this doctrine of the second coming of Christ, by a double note of asseueratiō, *Enē so, Amen*. One of these is taken frō the Ebrewes *Amen*: the second from the Grecians *amen*. Euen as we auouch a thing, first by a simple and bare affirmation or negation: secondly, by an earnest asseueration: thirdly, by an oath. Now in that *S. Iohn* vseth these two kinds of assuring in this weightie matter of Christs second coming, we see our dutie: we must not vse the like at any time or thing, but onely in matters of weight and moment: so *S. Iohn* here, *he shall come*, and that certainly, vndoubtedly it shal be so. Then the practise of the is wicked, which vse these words in matters of no weight, at euery word, and much more which bind euery word with an oath which is far more. Yea though our Sauior oftē vseth these words of asseueration, yet onely in matters of weight and moment, and when the hearers were to be certified of the truth of a thing which was of importance.

2 He would by this shew, that the coming of Christ is certaine and most vndoubted: and to make vs out of all doubt, he addeth these two words of asseueratiō, *Enē so, Amen*: most certainly it will come, then we should often thinke of this matter, for in
our

our nature there is a corruption, which perswadeth vs that the coming of Christ is not yet: that we shall not be summoned either by generall or particular iudgement: therefore as the wicked seruant, we deferre the coming of Christ. To take away this corruption, he saith, he cometh, yea certainly, vndoubtedly he cometh, and that out of hand.

Thirdly, to shew a speciall note and marke of Gods child: for he doth not onely asseuere, but withall desiteth and longeth for the coming of Christ: Lord let it be so, *Amen*, let it euen be so. They long for and desire Christ his coming to iudgment: but the wicked could wish with all their hearts, that it might neuer be. The godly they know, that when Christ shall come, then they shall haue that crowne of immortalitie and glorie, which he hath prepared for all which desire his coming. But the wicked, and they which are not reconciled to God in Christ nor assured of their owne saluation, they cannot for their life once wish and desire the coming of Christ. So that by this one note we may iudge of our owne estates, whether we belong to Christ or not: for if we desire and long for his second coming to iudgement, if we wish he would come quickly, then it is a certain token and signe, we be reconciled to God in Christ, that we belong to him. But if as yet we feele not this longing and hungering desire in vs, then we must suspect our selues, and labour to feele it euery day: for it is the desire of the Saints, and of all the true children of God. *2. Tim. 4. 8. Renel. 12. 10. Ren. 6. 10.*

After that *S. Iohn* had described Christ at large here in this eighth verse, he bringeth him in speaking of himselfe by a figure. *I am Alpha and Omega*, saith the Lord. *Vers. 8.*

The end and scope of this eighth verse is, to confirme the former description of Christ. The reason is thus framed: He which is the beginning and the end of all, he is sufficient to be a King, Priest, and Prophet, and is both able and willing to bestow all blessings on his Church. This first part of the argument is omitted: the second part is contained in this eighth verse: But *I am the beginning and the end, &c. I am sufficient, &c.*

In this eighth verse are three points concerning Christ: first, *Three points.* he is the beginning and the end: *I am alpha and omega:* second-

ly, he is, was, and is to come: thirdly, he is almightie, omnipotent.

1. Point.

1 The first point is, that Christ is the beginning and the end, which he expresseth by a comparison taken from the Greeke alphabet, or the *A. B. C.* of the Grecians: for as in their Greeke alphabet, *α* is the first letter, and *ω* the last: so I, saith Christ, am the beginning of all things, and the end of all: as those letters in the Greeke alphabet, so am I in all things the first and last.

Out of this, that Christ borroweth this comparison from the Greeke alphabet, the Papists gather, that the word may be read and deliuered to the people in an vnknowne tounge, because Christ here useth an vnknowne tounge, to those whom he gaue this vision. But though the vnlearned, and vnlettered English man, knoweth not what *α* and *ω* is: yet the Church to who this booke was written, being the Grecians, knew what they meant generally. Againe, though the spirit of God useth a strange word in one place, we may not follow that in the whole word of God, in the whole seruice and worship of God, as the Papists do.

Christ is said to be the beginning and the end: first, because he is the very first of all things: there was nothing before he was, he had a being, when all other creatures were not but begunne to be, then was he the same that he is now: he had his being and subsisting before all creatures: and for this saith *S. Iohn*, chap. 1. verse 1. *In the beginning was the word*: that is, the Son of God, he had his being and subsisting, when all other creatures wanted it, and began to be.

This proueth the eternitie of Christ, because he had his being before any creature was created, he was a substance and essence begotten of the Father before all worlds, not created as other creatures are, or made of any other.

Secondly, he is called the beginning, because he giueth a beginning to all creatures: for all things which were created, were created by him, and had their being from him. So that he is the true beginning of all things. *Coloss. 1. 16. All things are from him*, he is the beginning of all: and all are for him, he is the end of all.

Seeing.

Seeing Christ giues a being to all things, then we when we are to beginne any businesse in word or deed, we must begin it with inuocation on the name of Christ: for Christ he giues the beginning and proceeding to all things. Then we which haue our beginnings of him, must not dare to begin anything without inuocation on his name. Vse 1.

Secondly, the same Christ he is the end of all things for two causes: first, because he is the last of all things, and after him is nothing in subsisting and being: nay if all creatures were left to themselves, they would all come to nothing: and yet though all should come to nothing, Christ would remaine the same he was for euer: namely, the eternall Sonne and word of the Father. In that some creatures are become eternall, this is not of themselves, but by Christ, he giues them eternall being and durance, and if they were left to themselves, they would come to nothing as well as others.

This then shold make vs with full purpose of heart to cleaue to Christ, if we would enioy eternall happinesse: for without him, and vnlesse we haue it from him, we cannot but come to an end. Vse.

Secondly, he is the end, because all things were made to serue him. *Coloss. 1. 16. For him were all things created.*

Which is, was, and is to come. These words were expounded 2. Point. in the fourth verse, where the very same are affirmed of the Father. The sense is, that Christ is a substance and essence, or being, subsisting in, by, and from himselfe, and such a substance shall be for euer.

Hence we learne two things: first, that the second person in the Trinitie is consubstantiall with the Father, of one and the same substance and nature with him. And the reason is, because there can be but one onely substance, essence, and being, which can be in and by it selfe, and from it selfe alone: there cannot be two or moe, but onely one. As there cannot be two eternals, or two infinits, two omnipotents and absolute Lords which haue nothing one of another. Now in the fourth verse it is said of the Father, that he is a substance of, in, by, and from himselfe alone: and here of the Sonne is rehearsed the same. Then they, seeing

there can be but one such essence, must needs be all one: and the Sonne must needs be the same substance, nature, and essence with the Father: not like him, or diuerse from him, but the selfe same in substance and nature: that is, their Godhead is consubstantiall, &c. They be indeed two distinct persons, yet but one substance and diuine essence in the Godhead, which *S. Iohn* intimates, affirming the same words of both,

*Christ is au'th-
or.*

2

Hence we learne, that Christ is God of himselfe: for in the same respect the Father is God, he is God: and as the Father is, was, and is to come: so in the same regard is Christ, &c. But the Father is God of himselfe, ergo, also Christ is God of himselfe. Indeed as he is the Sonne, so he is of the Father, hath this beginning from him: but as he is God, he is consubstantiall with the Father, and coequall with him, hath his essence of and in himselfe. And the same is to be affirmed of the holy Ghost, as he is the third person: he proceedes from the Father and the Sonne, but as he is God, he is of, from and in himselfe.

3

3 That Christ is coeternall with the Father, and as euermlasting as he is, euery way coequall to the Father, hauing the same attributes equally with him, as he is God.

The third point

The Almighty. As there is in God, so is there in Christ a double power: first, a potentiall: secondly an actuall power. Potentiall is that whereby he can do many things moe then he wil do; as he could raise children to *Abraham* of the stones, but he would not: he could haue deliuered Christ from death, but he would not. It is not taken for this power here principally, but rather for the second, namely, his actuall power, whereby he bringeth to passe without let and impediment, whatsoever he decreeth, willet, or promiseth. So he is called Almighty here, because he bringeth to passe actually, whatsoever he promiseth to his in his word, without let and stop.

Ps. 1.

Seeing he is thus Almighty, hence come two comforts to his children: first, that whatsoever he hath promised his church in Christ, shall be brought to passe effectually, without stop and let, as assuredly as he promised it. Now since he promiseth in the Gospel to all penitent sinners remission of sinnes, mortification, iustification, and life euermlasting; euery one of them in their

their time shall be done. Every true beleeuers shall haue pardon of his finnes, mortification, sanctification, and eternall life, because he which promised is almightie, able and willing to do all he promised.

This is a comfort to all true beleeuers: for all men and Angels cannot giue one of these: but Christ he is omnipotent, he can and will giue them all.

2 He will and can giue his Church sufficient securitie and ease from all her enemies: he can defend and guard her against all their furie and malice; he is about them, and can bridle their might, when and how he pleaseth.

This then affoord vs two duties. First, in the crosse and tribulation to humble our selues vnder the hand of God. For it is the Lord which correcteth vs, he is able to do what he list, and more then he will.

Secondly, this should make vs to performe heartie obedience in our generall and particular callings, to walke vprightly before him, seeing he is almightie, and seeth whether we walke sincerely or not: if we do not, he is able to punish vs. Gen. 17. it is the argument of God to perswade Abraham to walke vprightly, because he is almightie, able to correct and destroy those which refuse to obey him.

This farre of the two first parts of this Chapter, the Inscripti-
on, and the Titles of this booke.

1 John, &c. Here followeth the third part of this Chapter. Verse 9.
which containeth a vision, from this ninth verse to the end of the third Chapter. *The third part of this chapter.*

In this vision, two things are to be noted: first, the circumstances: secondly, the parts. The circumstances in the ninth and tenth verses: the parts from thence, to the end of the third Chapter.

The circumstances of this vision are 4. the first, touching the person to whom this vision befell, John: the second, the place where, in Patmos: the third, the manner how it is propounded: it was deliuered to him, being *ranished in the spirit*: the fourth, the time when, *on the Lords day*.

The first circumstance is the person to whom this vision be- 1. Circumstances

fell, *Iohn*. He doth this to shew, that it was giuen him of the Lord: for as the Lord hath his visions and reuelations, so the Diuell hath his: but they be distinguished by the persons to whom they be giuen. God giueth his visions not to all men, but to those which are most fit for them, such as be most holy men for life, indued with exceeding gifts of God, as knowledge, wisdom, constancie, zeale, pietie, and religion. So in the old Testament he deliuered the to his Prophets, not to all, but his seruants, men of singular gifts and graces, and of exceeding holinesse and pietie. Indeede the Lord reuealed some particular things to wicked men, as to *Balaam*, but they neuer knew them comfortably. It is a propertie belonging to the seruants of God to haue a vision reuealed, and to know the same.

Now both these befell *S. Iohn*, he was a man of exceeding holinesse of life, (for Christ loued him) and of singular and rare gifts. Now the diuell maketh no such choice, but his visions befall men which are heretikes, wicked, notorious sinners, and they haue no rare and speciall gifts as the others: so that by this a man may distinguish them, by the persons to whom they befall. Then we must esteeme of it as a singular gift of God giuen to his owne Apostle *S. Iohn*.

Verse 9.
1. Title.

After the description of Christ, *Iohn* describes himselfe by many modest tearmes: first, *Your brother*, that is, of them being members all of the mysticall bodie Christ Iesus: for the church of God is a familie, God the Father is head and householder, Iesus Christ is the elder brother, we all are fellow brethren in and by Christ, being by him the adopted sonnes of God, and brethren to each other.

Verse 1.

By this title first he setteth out his humilitie and great modestie: for he was a man at that time aboue all men which liued, in regard of his gifts and holinesse of life: he was the last Apostle, and had apostolicall authoritie, being a most true professor, yet he calleth himselfe a *brother* to all true beleeuers, maketh himselfe but equall with them, though they were farre inferiour to him. And so should we esteeme better of all our brethren, then of our selues, and make our selues inferior to them.

Secondly, by this title we see he had his hart full of brotherly loue

loue to all the members of the church of Christ: so we are bound to loue all men, as they be of the same flesh with vs; but those which be of the same faith & religion, to these especially should we shew our loue and affection. It is good reason, that they which haue the same head Christ, the same God, the same faith, hope, religion, and redemption by Iesus Christ, should be so affected to one another: and being linked by all these, should haue a more neare loue, then is between man & man. But in this world, as *Esay* saith, men hate their brethren, euen for the profession of the same religion, whereby they thinke to be saued. If they liue with more conscience then others, then they reuile, speake ill of, and hate them for the name of Christ. Rom. 12. 7. 8.

The second title: *Companion* or fellow partner, compartner in tribulations, in the kingdome and in patience. He was partner with them in tribulations for two causes: first, because at that time when he wrote this vision, the whole Church was in persecutio and tribulation, vnder that cruell tyrant *Domitian*, about fourescore or an hundred yeares after Christ: and so he fled to Patmos at that time, and being mindfull of the afflictions of the Church, whereof he was a member, he calls himselfe a partner with them in affliction.

By which he shewes our estate, that it is to be vnder the crosse, to liue in affliction; not to be companions of peace and ease, but partakers of affliction and tribulation: and therfore those which will be Christs Disciples and follow him, they must deny themselves, and take vp their crosse dayly; and because of this estate the Church in this world is called the *militant Church*. Now seeing the state of the Church is in tribulation: we in this land and Church, which haue had peace and quietnes so long without persecution, we must know that it is giuen vs, that now in the time of peace we might prepare our selues against the day of triall and persecution: for seeing the estate of the Church is to be vnder affliction and persecution, we are bound to looke for it, and know that the Lord will come and try his Church: for it must increase and grow by triall. The Lord hath sent labourers into his haruest a long time, which haue gathered much wheate into the Lords barne. Now there must come a day when the v. 6.

Lord will take his fan and sieue into his hands, and will with the fan and sieue of persecution try the wheat, and winnow the corne from the chaffe, that it may appeare who are his true children. Then stands it vs in hand, to take heed we be found good corne and not chaffe, that we may abide the sieue, that we proue not light corne, blowne about with the wind, and sit to be cast into the fire to be burnt.

He calls himselfe their fellow partner in affliction, because his pitfull hart was moued with compassion to all his fellow members and partners in affliction, when he remembred their persecution and affliction they suffered vnder the cruell tyrant *Domitian*. Now looke what was in him, the same affection should be in vs, our hearts should be pitfull, full of compassion for the poore afflicted members of Christ: seeing they be our fellow members, we should haue a fellow feeling with them, and shew our compassion in pittying them. If the foote be pricked, the head stoopes, the eye beholds and lookes on it, the finger puls it out, the hand applies the plaister, the other foot is ready to run for help, the tongue to aske for counsell, and all the members are ready to affoord their mutuall helpe in pittie and fellow-feeling: so when any members of the Church suffer affliction, be pricked with persecution for Christs cause, then should we, as fellow members of one body, be ready to do all the helpe we can to them, especially in shewing our fellow-feeling with them.

3.

In the kingdome of Christ. That is, the kingdome of heauen. In that he sets first affliction, then addes a kingdome, he shewes that the afflictions & crosse for Christs sake, is the ready way to the kingdome of heauen: it is the way which is beaten and troden by the Prophets, Apostles and the Saints of God: as the Apostle saith, *Through manifold tribulations we must enter into heauen.* And this momentary affliction causeth to vs an infinite weight of glory: not that it deserues or effects it, but that it is the path-way to heauen.

AL 14. 21.
2. Cor. 4. 18.

V^{se}.

Then we must not thinke it strange when it befalleth vs, for it is the meanes to bring wandring sheepe out of the way, into the ready and beaten way to heauen; nay it is rather to be thought strange.

strange when we haue no affliction: for then we be gone out of the way, seeing the Lord afflicts euery child which is his. Heb. 12. 8.

In patience. A vertue whereby we are made able to perseuere in affliction, to go on suffering till we come to heauen. Afflictions are the beaten way, heauen is our ioyfull end, patience is the meanes to make vs perseuere and go on till we come to our iourneys end. *Rom. 15. 4.* Hope to come to heauen is obtained by patience, which maketh a beleeuers to go on suffering till he come to life eternall. There is much fruite in the good ground, but not obtained without patience: and the true beleuere liues by hope in this life, yet cannot come to heauen without patience. *Iames 5. 9.*

Now because men will say, Patience is a hard matter, and so are discouraged; therefore to set an edge on their desire, he addes it is the kingdome and patience of Christ: first, because he commaunds it: secondly, patience cometh from the spirit of Christ: thirdly, because as he suffereth in his members, it is called his patience, for their misery and suffering is his: when his members suffer, he suffereth. And this is a singular comfort to all suffering the crosse, that they haue Christ their fellow sufferer, he takes part with them, puts vnder his shoulder, he is content to suffer with them. And in these three standeth the communion of Saints in suffering tribulation. The first step to this fellowship & communion of Saints, is to beare and be in tribulation, and he which is not come to that, is not yet in the communion of Saints. Then secondly, he must patiently beare them, perseuere without grudging or repining: then followes the last, which is the end of all, the enioying of the kingdome of heauen.

Which was in the Ile called Pathmos. In these words is the second circumstance, namely, the place where this vision was giuen to *Iohn*, namely, in the Ile Pathmos; an Island, and one of those which the Geographers call *Sporades*, lying on the left side of the Churches of Asia, neare to the East Churches by the sea, commonly called the Egean sea: this Island was a small, base, and poore Island, litle or neuer a whit inhabited.

S. Iohn had his vision, not at Ierusalem, at Antioch, or Rome, but in Pathmos, a base, poore, and litle inhabited Island. By

which we see, that in the new Testament there is no respect of one place aboue another, in regard of Gods presence and our fellowship with him: he doth as well giue *John* this vision in *Pathmos*, as to others his Prophets and Apostles in *Ierusalem*. In the old Testament there was regard of places: as the Lord shewed his presence, and tyed his worship especially to his tabernacle and temple at *Ierusalem*; there was the place where he would be worshipped, which *Daniel* in his prophecy sheweth: for being in captiuitie, he in his chamber openeth the window which was towards the temple at *Ierusalem*. But now in the new Testament that regard of place is abolished. *1 Tim. 2. 8.* Pray euery where, lifting vp pure hands in regard of Gods worship and presence; in all the duties of Religion we must do the like.

Dan. 6.

Vse.

Then away with Popish pilgrimage, to churches and chapels of Saints, or to their reliques, for this is meere superstition: for God is present euery where, and a man may haue fellowship with him in one place as wel as another. Also, this may serue to correct our false conceit we haue of our churches and chappels; for we come into our common houses wherein we dwell, and neuer humble our selues, we thinke in these places we need not: but if we come into the Church neuer so often, we then fall downe and humble our hearts in prayer: the reason is, because we thinke that God is more present there, and we should sooner be heard there then in our houses, and that they be more holy. But in the new Testament now, all such diuersitie of place is abolished, in regard of Gods seruice and presence. Indeed Churches must be maintained, because in them the people may more conueniently meete together to serue God: but we must not think but that common houses are as holy as they for Gods seruice: onely for decency sake, when we that are many may assemble together in one place, they be more holy then any dwelling house, for that time when the word is preached, and prayer made in them.

In this circumstance of place note two things, first, by what meanes *S. Iohn* came thither: secondly, to what end, and for what cause. First, he came thither by banishment: the Empe-

rouer.

rouer *Domitian* exiled him: secondly, he came for the word of God.

He came and abode in *Pathmos*, being banished for the Gospels sake. In this banishment consider first that *S. Iohn* was a most worthy Apostle, endued with rare gifts, a singular maintainer of the Gospell, and a famous founder of the Church of God, and chiefe guide thereof in those dayes, and for this cause most hated of the cruel persecutor *Domitian*, & of the Romanes: yet whereas many other of the true Christians were put to the sword, *S. Iohn* is not, he escapeth and was banished. The cause of this was Gods speciall providence, by which he had reserved him for the benefit of the Church, that he might receive this revelation, and commit it to the Church to the perpetuall good of all his children. And so though *Domitian* was a cruell tyrant, yet he could not kill him, but God ouer-ruled him, that he did but banish him into this Iland, wherein he received these visions, and penned them for the good of the Church.

By this we see the great care and providence of God that he hath ouer his Church, that he doth bridle and ouer-rule the minds and might of cruell Emperours, that they cannot but do al that they do to the glory of God, though they intend the contrary. For *Domitian* intended only the hurt of *Iohn*, yet see, by his banishment into that Ile, he had fit place to receive these visions for the good of the Church. So in the death of Christ, the Iewes and Gentiles, and all men banded themselves together to put Christ to death, and the diuell he laboured to stirre them on to practise their intended malice: yet the providence of God directeth and ordereth this their malice and wicked practise to the redemption of mankind. So *Iosephs* brethren intended no such deliuerance as God wrought by him, in selling their brother. This consideration should comfort all Gods children, &c.

When we are oppressed and persecuted by tyrants for Christs sake, we must make no resistance, offer no violence, but suffer all things without resisting, for the Christians weapons are onely prayers and teares: and *S. Iohn* often in this booke addeth after the foretelling of persecution, *Here is the patience of Saints*, shewing that must be the complet armour against all out enemies.

Doftr. 1.

Doftr. 2.

Arma Christianorum,
preces & lacrimae.

Pse. 1.

Seeing he came into this Island not of his owne accord, but by violence and constraint, he thought it not a good and happy kind of life. For if he had come into this place, being litle or not inhabited, he could not do this dutie of his Apostleship: he could not haue founded the Church. This then confuteth the Monkish life, which is no life of holy perfection, (as they call it) but of great superstition, *S. Iohn* would not haue left all companie of men, but that he was compelled to leaue the: then the life of those which voluntarily leaue all companie of men, liuing in cloisters and secret places, cannot be a life of perfection, but of all imperfection: man is borne to do good to others.

Psa.

Seeing *S. Iohn* was banished, and here receiued his visions, we see that those which honour God, he will honour them. For *S. Iohn* was banished, then which what could they do more to hurt him? Yet then, because it was for Gods cause, God doth most honour him, in revealing to him these visions. So when *Ioseph* was sold of his brethren, and most dishonoured of them, then God exalted him. The same may be said of *Daniel*, who when he was most dishonoured of men, then the Lord exalted him above all other men: and the same is true of all Gods children, they which honor him, he will honour them.

1 Sam. 2.

2 The cause for which he came into this Isle: For the word of God: that is, because he was by calling a publisher and preacher of the word of God, for which cause he was banished. By which we may note, that all naturall men (as *Domitian* and the Romaines were, and all men are by nature) hate all that professe God, hate his word, they cannot abide it. For *S. Iohn* a most worthie Apostle, a famous man for gifts, a singular preacher of the word of God: yet for this very cause is hunted, nay banished, not for his owne cause, but for the word of God. This hath bene seene in all heathen Emperours, yea and all men by nature hate the word: yet though they hate it in their hearts, the same word it winneth them, and hath taken place in them to conuert them, and to make them to loue it: which sheweth, that the word taught by the Prophets and Apostles, is indeed the true word of God, not the inuention of man. For if the word which is hated of all men by nature, had not some diuine power

wer

wer in it, it could neuer make such mē to loue it by grace, which hate it by nature. For no word of man can make a man which hateth the same to loue it, but onely the word of God.

Seeing *Iohn* was banished for Gods word, all Ministers are v/a to cast their accompts, to make a reckoning that they may and must suffer persecution, nay, banishment for the word of God. For that which the principall founders and chiefe builders of the Church haue suffered, that cannot be auoyded of them which are ordinarie Ministers. Christ he acquainted his disciples with this, and telleth them, that they are euen accursed, when all men speake well of them. *Luk. 6. 26.* They must not seeke to haue all thinke well of them, but rather feare if all men like of them, they are accursed.

And witnesse bearing. That is, for the testimonie of the history and doctrine of the Gospell: the summe whereof is, that Iesus Christ the sonne of *Mary* is our Redeemer, to procure to vs righteousness and life euerlasting. Now he addeth after the other, this of the Gospell, as a doctrine how to come to life euerlasting and righteousness in Iesus Christ: to shew, for what part of the word we are most hated and persecuted, not so much for the law as for the Gospell: because the law is partly natural, the Gospell is aboue nature: as, to beleue that God made his Gen. 3. couenant with our first parents, that the seed of the womā shold bruisse the serpents head. Now the Gospell is the glad tidings, in which there is declared, that the promised seed is come, and therefore the diuell he hateth this part most of all, and laboureth man to hinder the course of the Gospell, rather then of the law. So three hundred yeares after Christ, he laboured by might and maine to extinguish the Gospell, to keepe men in ignorance of the Messiah: but when he could not preuaile by force & might, he vsed sophistrie and deceit, and brought in heresies to obscure the truth of the Gospell, and to ouerthrow the natures, offices and benefites of Christ.

Then we are bound to do the contrarie: seeing he laboureth v/a to extinguish it, we must labour to maintaine and defend it, we must labour as much to know it, as he doth to keepe vs in ignorance, that so we may obey and beleue it.

And I was ravisht on the Lords day, &c. In this tenth verse are two circumstances: the first, which is the third in number, is the manner of receiuing this vision, and giuing of it to *Iohn*, namely, in a trance: the second or fourth, the time, *on that Lords day, or that day of the Lord.*

I was in the spirit. Here we see he receiued this vision in a trance. *I was in the spirit:* that is, I was by the mightie and extraordinarie worke of the spirit of God cast into a trance. This appeareth by comparing this Prophecie with other, as with that of *Ezechiel*, who when he receiued any vision, was cast into a trance by Gods spirit.

To vnderstand this, consider two things: first, what a trance is: secondly, the end of it. A trance is an extraordinarie worke or action of Gods spirit, ergo, not of the constellation and temperature of the starres, nor from the constitution of mans bodie, or imaginations of men, but wrought by the holy Ghost. Secondly, it is not euery worke, but an extraordinarie work, about the order of nature, a powerfull and mightie work of the holy Ghost: wherein the whole man both in bodie and mind is altered, and for that cause *S. Iohn* saith: *I was in the spirit.*

This action consisteth in two actions: one of the mind, and the other of the bodie. In procuring a trance, the spirit of God casteth a man into a dead sleepe, whereby all the senses both inward and outward are benumbed. So *Gen. 15. 12.* when God renewed the couenant with *Abraham*, he cast him into a trance, that is, into a dead sleepe: the senses all were benumbed, onely the mind and soule working.

The other action of the holy Ghost is on the mind, to draw it from fellowship with the bodie and all the senses, to haue fellowship with God, that so the spirit of God may enlighten it with light and knowledge of things which are to reuealed to it. And so we see in other extasies and traunces: as that of *Peter*, his mind was drawne from the fellowship with the bodie, and was in fellowship with God.

Then a trance is a mightie and powerfull worke of the holy Ghost, both in bodie and mind: whereby both the mind is drawne from fellowship with the bodie, and vnto the fellowship

Act. 10.

What a
trance is.

ship of God; and also enlightened with light and knowledge of God, to vnderstand things to be reuealed. Now followeth the end of a trance.

The cause why men are cast into trances in receiuing any visions, is, that (as *S. Iohn* here) they might know, that the things deliuered were not inuented of themselves, but giuen of God. For in *Iohn*, his bodie and all his senses were benumbed; he neither heard, saw, nor felt, but they were asleepe, and therefore the vision must needs be from God.

Secondly, that they might take the deeper impression in his and their mind: for when the mind is freed from fellowship with the bodie, not hindered by any fantasies of the senses, they being all asleepe and quiet, then the mind hath best opportunity to attend and marke, to know and vnderstand, and also to imprint deeper in memorie things reuealed.

Here we see the great care of God, who would not haue his *Doctrine*, children to receiue these visions by senses imperfectly: but that they might thoroughly vnderstand, know, beleue, and carie the away in faithfull memorie, he deliuered them in extasies and trances, the mind then being no whit hindred with fellowship of the bodie, but freed from the same. The like care had he of his Prophets: that they might certainly know, constantly beleue, and faithfully remember those visions, he would not haue their minds troubled with the fellowship of the bodie, or of the senses inward or outward.

And there is good reason of this: for they which must teach a thing to other, to make them know and vnderstand, to beleue and remember the same, it is reason they should vnderstand and hold it themselves, and keepe it well in memorie.

This seeing the Lord did, to make them to vnderstand more thoroughly, to beleue more constantly, and to carie away more faithfully, this teacheth Ministers, that they must haue also the through vnderstanding and knowledge of the word, beleue it constantly, and remember it carefully. Now we must not looke for and expect trances, as they had, but we must come to this by continuall studie in the word, which is the ordinarie meanes to come to that knowledge: it is the meanes by which all men,

Preachers, students and hearers do know. Then we should seeke to be cunning in the text of Scripture, to vnderstand the proper sense of it, to be good text men, to vnderstand, beleue, and remember it.

Vse. Then this is a fault of those which in studying of diuinity, will rather reade auncient writings of men, nay the base writings of of wicked and hereticall Friers, then of the holy word of God.

In that he receiued this vision & will of God in a trance, and had it so made fully known vnto him: we see, that though he was indued with singular gifts, yet the Lord addeth more knowledge to his former: so that we see that saying iustified, *To him which hath shall be giuen.* *S. Iohn* being so carefull to do his dutie of an Apostle, the Lord reuealeth his will to him in most full manner. Euen so all that haue care to know the will and word of God, though their knowledge be small at the first, yet the Lord will help them, adde dayly to their knowledge and increase it. So we see, why many heare the word, but increase not, but waxe worse, or stand at a stay: the reason is, because they labour not to haue their knowledge increased; for if they did, then to him which hath, he should haue more added.

Nay contrarily, when we be negligent to heare and to know the wil and word of God, we haue a spirit indeed, but not Gods, but the spirit of slumber, of blindnes and ignorance: so that we see and see not, heare and vnderstand not. *E/say 29. 10.*

Vse 10:

On the Lords day. In these words is the fourth circumstance, namely, the time when this vision was graunted to *S. Iohn*. This day which here is called the Lords day, among the Iewes was the first day of the weeke, called by vs Sunday.

It is called the Lords day for two causes: first, because on this day Christ rose from death to life: for Christ was buried the euen of the Iewes Sabbath which is our friday, and he rested in the graue their whole Sabbath, which is our saturday, and rose the first day of the weeke early in the morning, which is our Sunday: and for this cause first it is called, *the Lords day.*

2 It is called the Lords day, because this first day, to the beleeuing Iewes, was to them in stead of their Sabbath, in which day.

day they worshipped God solemnly: it was the day appointed to his seruice among them, and for this cause especially it is called the Lords day.

To vnderstand how it is called the Lords day, we must know three points: first, who changed this day from the Iewes Sabbath: secondly, for what cause: thirdly, whether the Church haue now in the new Testament power to change the Sabbath day to any other day then this seventh day. The changer and appointer of this Sabbath of the new testament was Christ himselfe, though it be commonly thought that the Church in the new testament and Christian Emperors changed it. My reasons are these: 1. That which the Apostles deliuered and inioyned the Church, that they receiued from Christ, either by voice or instinct, for they deliuered nothing of their owne head: but they deliuered this, & inioyned this Sabbath to the Church, although they receiued it from Christ. That they inioyned this day of rest and Sabbath to the Church, it appeareth 1. *Cor. 16. 1.* For Paul ordained that the collection for the poore should be on the first day of the weeke, he ordained it, and left it not to the choise of the Church, but appointed it by authoritie Apostolicall from Christ. Now the day of collecting for the poore (as appeareth in the histories of the Church) was the Sabbath day: when the people were assembled, then they vsed to make their collection: for before that collection there went the word preached, and the sacrament of the Lords supper: and this was the custom of the Church many yeares after Christ, first to haue the word preached and the sacraments administred, then to gather for the poore: and for this cause the Lords supper is called a sacrifice, or a masse, not as the Papists vse it, but because in it we offer, not to the Lord, but to the poore, which was sent them, and so gaue the name to that sacrament to be called the masse. By which it appeareth, that they appointed by Apostolicall authoritie the first day of the weeke to be the Sabbath of the new Testament, which here is called the Lords day. A second reason is this. The Apostles kept this day for the Sabbath of the new testament, *Act. 20. 7.* and it cannot be proved that they obserued any other day for the Sabbath, but onely in one case, when they liued

Masse à mendo.

among the Jewes, when they kept their old Sabbath. A third reason, is, *John 20. 19. 26.* That same day which Christ rose from death being the first day of the weeke, he appeared to his Disciples to instruct them; and the eight day after, he appeared again the first day of the weeke, instructing them in matters belonging to the kingdome of heauen. Now it is more then likely Christ would celebrate and keepe that day for a Sabbath wherein he rose, and the eight day after appeared to instruct his Disciples.

Now the Sabbath of the Jewes was changed for two causes: first, to maintaine the liberty of the Church of the new Testament, whereof this was a great part, that they were freed from the ceremonies of the Jewes: for here when this day was changed, the Church was no more tied to the Jewes Sabbath day, neither had any such regard after of dayes and times.

Secondly, that there might be a more fit time for the remembrance of the worke of redemption: for as God in the old Testament appointed the seuenth day to be a day of rest, to remember the first creation: so there should be a day to celebrate this worke, which is a wonderfull creation, in which we are made new men, so that there is now a new heauen, and new earth, as *Isay* speaketh, chap. 66.

Nay this is a more glorious work then that, seeing in that creation *Adam* was the head, in this Christ Iesus he is the head. In that *Adam* was the chiefe, in this Christ. In that *Heuah* was giuen to *Adam*, in this we to Christ, his Church to him. In that, *Adam* had an earthly paradise, in this redemption we haue a spirituall kingdome. In that, Gods mercy onely, in this both his mercy and iustice in punishing of Christ, and giuing vs forgiveness, appeared. In that, God shewed his wisdome & goodnes but in part, but herein this he shewed it fully. In that, he made man of nothing, but now he made him of worse then nothing, & better then euer he was. Therefore seeing this day of our redemption is farre passing that, and the Lord appointed a day for the remembrance thereof, much more should there be one for the remembrance of this: now there is no day fitter then that day wherein Christ Iesus rose from death to life, to remember his resurrection.

But

But may the Church now in the new Testament change the Sabbath to any other day, as to Tuesday, Wednesday, &c. *Answer.* It cannot, I thinke: because times and seasons belong to God, he alone can dispose of the, *Act. 1. 6.* the church hath not knowledge of times and seasons, much lesse of the ordering and disposing of them: for that which the Father keepeth in his owne bosome, the Church cannot know, but the Father alone so keepeth times and seasons, therefore the church cannot know them. And as the church of the Iewes had not power to change their Sabbath, no more hath the Church in the new Testament, to change their Sabbaths.

Ob. But the Iewes had authoritie to appoint feasts: therefore they could appoint Sabbath dayes. *Heb. 9. 17.* they for their deliuerance appoint a day of rest, of reioycing. So *1. Maccab. 4. 8.* They appointed indeed solempne dayes for reioycing, and solempne feasts for speciall deliuerance, but they appointed not any day for a sabbath & rest, for the whole seruice of God. Some hold that the Church hath power to alter it, nay, to make any day the Sabbath, or if it could be conueniently, two dayes in a weeke, but they haue no warrant out of the word. *Answer.*

If this day, the Lords day, be a day to remember the death, resurrection and merits of Christ, we see three sorts of men here reprobred; first them which make this day a day of pleasure, pastime and delight. For most young men and seruants imploy this day wholly on their own delights and pleasures, making it a day of carnall reioycing, spending it in eating, drinking, carding, dicing, riot and excessse, so that they turne this Lords day set apart to his worship, into a day to offer sacrifice to the diuel. The second sort is of them which liue more ciuilly then the former, yet they thinke they may do their owne businesse, and take iorneyes on this day; and that vpon this false ground, that a man may aswell and with as honest and good an heart serue God in his owne businesse at home, as they which go to Church. But by this they make the Lords day appointed to his seruice, their owne day, to do their owne worke, and not his. The third sort is, of those which keepe the Sabbath onely at morning and euening Prayer, but as for the rest of the day, they may

spend it how they will, on their owne pleasures and pastimes, or their owne businesse: and of this sort are many in the world, who come to the Church but onely so far as the law of the Land inioynes them; and these men part stakes with God, they giue him one part and that the lesser, and bestow the other on their owne businesse or pleasure: whereas it is the Lords day, not in part but in whole, and so they breake the fourth commaundement.

Then on the contrary, our dutie is to keep this day a Sabbath to the Lord, as we are commaunded in the fourth commaundement: 1. we must rest from all our sinnes: secondly, from all the workes of our callings, and imploy it wholly on the seruice of God, sanctifying this day of rest to the worship of God from the morning to the euening.

Now there is a double sanctifying of the Sabbath, first publicke in the congregation, when we come to the Church to pray and giue thanks, and there to heare the word and receiue the sacraments: secondly, priuate, when men in their owne priuate houses at home sanctifie it, in meditating, reading, and thinking of the word, in praying priuately, and giuing thanks for benefits: we must not imploy that day in our owne businesse. If the Officer should take our seruant from our works, & set him about the common good, we would be grieved. And if we take the day appointed to Gods seruice, and bestow it on our owne affaires: shall not the Lord be offended?

And the cause why we heare the word publickely and neuer profit, is, because we sanctifie the sabbath onely publickely and not priuately: so that vnlesse we meditate, reade the word, pray, and sanctifie the sabbath at home, we may heare and reade the word publickely, but without all increase of grace, faith, knowledge and repentance: but if we performe neither, it is not possible to get any grace, seeing this day is set apart for that end. Now to proceed.

The reason why the Lord he gaue *Iohn* these visions, rather on this day then another, is, because though *Iohn* was absent in body from the Church, yet he was present in spirit, in praying for it at this time: for being absent, he would shew his presence in such duties as he could performe in that solitary place, as fasting,

ting, prayer, &c. Now when he was thus occupied, the Lord reuealeth his will to him concerning the estate of the Church to the end of the world.

Seeing *Iohn* being in the Isle of *Pathmos*, a desert place, yet *Vfe.* he kept the Sabbath in all such duties as he could performe: hence we see, that they which are absent from the Church, as in prison, sicke of some great disease, or on the sea, yet they must keepe the Sabbath, they must pray, fast, and call on the name of God, &c.

In that he received the vision then, when he was exercised in *Vfe 2.* praying and fasting, here is a comfort for the children of God, that when men draw neare to God, he draweth neare to them, *Iam. 4.* *Iohn* a worthie Apostle being in banishment, he draweth neare to God in fasting and prayer, and the Lord he draweth nigh to him, and reuealeth his will to him: so if we draw neare to God by faith & repentance, by prayer and inuocation of his name, then he will draw neare to vs. But if we draw our selues backe from him, he draweth backe from vs. This then should moue vs about all things to seeke to draw as neare him as can be: then he will come and shew his goodnesse to vs. And the cause why we are so litle acquainted with his goodnesse, is, because we will not be acquainted with him.

Now in the second place followeth, after the fourth circumstance, the parts of the vision, which be two: first, an entrance into the vision: secondly, the representation of Christ as he is King and Priest to his Church, which is the substance and chiefe thing in this vision. The entrance is in these words: *And I heard a great voice behind me*, till the end of the eleuenth verse: The vision or the representation of Christ, from the twelfth to the end of the third Chapter.

The beginning and entrance into the vision, is a preparation, whereby the holy Ghost maketh *S. Iohn* more fit to receiue and marke things to be reuealed, which may be heard and seene.

The meanes to prepare *Iohn*, is a voice: *And I heard a voice.* The like to this we haue commonly in the old Testament, where the Lord reuealing his will, doth send a voyce before, to prepare his seruants to receiue his will, So when he would giue the

Exod. 19. 6.

covenant to *Adam Gen. 3.* he prepareth him to receiue, and letteth him heare a voyce in the garden which made him affraid, and to hide himselfe: after the Lord speaketh to him face to face, and giueth the covenant to him. So when the Lord would giue the law to *Moses* in the mount, first he sent a voyce in a mightie thunder, lightning, and sound of a trumpet: after he declared the law to him. *1. Sam. 3.* When the Lord would speake to *Samuel*, he sendeth a voyce to him three times, and after he speaketh to him plainly, and calleth him by his name. So commonly in the old Testament, when the Lord will declare his will to his Prophets, he prepareth them by a voyce. So to *Cornelius, Act. 10. &c.*

Pfe.

Seeing the Lord dealeth thus with this most famous Apostle, when he receiued his will by extraordinarie reuelation, being first prepared: then much more we which are sinfull men, which haue not the thousandth part of those graces he had, of knowledge, faith, and obedience, but are so farre short in ordinarie gifts, we must much more be prepared, that our vnderstanding and memorie may be made fit to heare, know and remember Gods will and word declared to vs. And the cause why we increase not in faith, repentance, and knowledge after long hearing the word, is, because we come vnprepared, without looking that our vnderstanding & memorie by all good means may be prepared to receiue the word.

The voyce is described by the place, *Behind me.* Not before him, but behind him, to stirre vp attention in him: for men most marke those things which come as of a sudden behind them: so this coming suddenly behind him, drew him to more earnest attention.

A great voyce. Thirdly, it is like the sound of a trumpet, not onely a great voyce, but full of power and maiestie, as the sound of a trumpet. Now he uttereth these to stirre vp more attention in him: for if he should heare an ordinarie voyce, or a small voyce, it would not perhaps haue stirred him: but being a great, powerfull, sudden, and a strange voyce, it could not but make him very attentiu.

Seeing he vseth all these meanes of attention in *John*, a wor-
thie

this Apostle, then much more must we vse all good meanes to stirre vp attention in vs, seeing we in all gifts are a thousand times inferiour to the least Apostle: seeing we be dull and heauie, and our senses not so sharpe as they shold be, we must stirre v^p our selues, seeke to be attentiu to that which which is spoken: and as *Lydia* did, we must employ all our diligence to make vs attētiue. And the cause why the word is preached without fruite, is, because we heare it without attention, and haue no affection to it. Now that we may do this, we must beware of two enemies of attention: the first, are by-thoughts, when a man bringeth his bodie, but his mind goeth about his farmes, or worldly riches, about a iourney, or bargaine, or some worldly affaires. These by-thoughts are thornes in our hearts, which choake the good seed of the word, that it cannot prosper and grow: for men which are troubled with them, cannot see how one point dependeth and hangeth on another, but their memorie and vnderstanding is hindered. 1Th. 16.

The second enemy is dulnesse and heauinesse of bodie and soule, which is shewed in this, that we come heauie and sleepeie to heare the word, and spend that time which we should employ in hearing, in heauinesse and sleeping. But if we will haue the word fruitfull to vs, we must shake off this drowfinesse, be affected with ioy and gladnesse, and heare the word with greedinesse. If a man should come heauie and sleepeie into the presence of the King, especially he being to tell him of great matters, or the giuing of him some great benefit, he would take it for disloyaltie and contempt of his Maiestie. The cause why the word hath no better effect in vs, but that after long preaching and teaching, we be as blind and ignorant as euer we were, is, because we come not prepared: contrarily, if we come prepared, the Lord increaseth our faith, knowledge, obedience, &c.

Saying, *I am Alpha and Omega*. Before he described the *Voice* voice which he heard, as a meanes of this preparation, by the place. Secondly, the qualitie, A great voice like the sound of a trumpet. In these words he proceedeth further to describe this voice in this eleuenth verse, & setteth downe the substance and matter of this voice which he heard: which standeth in two

things. The first, a testimonie, in these words: *I am Alpha and Omega, &c.* The second, a commandement, to write all these words, &c.

1 The testimonie in substance is in the eighth verse before. In which words of Christ, is, as before, a comparison: namely, as *Alpha* and *Omega* are the first and the last letters in the Greeke Alphabet: so I, Christ the Sonne of God, am the first and last of all things; because before me there was nothing, neither after me shall there be any thing in being and subsisting.

These words proue the Godhead and eternitie of Christ the second person. The end why Christ alleadgeth them, is, to certifie him, that these things he was about to shew him came from God, and therefore he bringeth his owne testimonie: namely, I which speake vnto thee am God, therefore the things I deliuer vnto thee are from God, euen from Iesus Christ the second person in the Trinitie, which am God equall to my Father.

In this testimonie of Christ, note a singular care of God in respect of his Church: he is carefull not onely to reueale his will to his Church, but withall to certifie his Church of the truth of the same. As here he telleth *Iohn*, that they come from God, to certifie his soule and conscience in the truth of the same: so he reuealeth not onely his will, but withall assureth men of the truth thereof. *Act. 10.* *Peter* hath a vision, and withall the Lord assureth him of the truth of that vision. And when Christ preached his Fathers will, he wrought many miracles, which were as scales to confirme the same, that it came from God.

Seeing the Lord he doth not only declare his will, but withall assureth men of the certaintie and truth of his will: this first confuteth the Papists, who teach, that the word of God is certaine in it selfe: but to vs it is not certaine till we heare the testimonie of the Church, which maketh the Scripture which is vncertaine to vs, though certaine in it selfe, to be certaine to vs. But we must here know and learne, that the Lord doth not onely reueale his will to his children, but withall vseth meanes to certifie mens hearts of the truth thereof, and so the word of God is most sure not only in it self, but euen to men, though the testimonie of the Church shold neuer speake word of the same.

2 This.

I. This confutes all carnall men, There be many which will be of no Religion, because there is (as they thinke) no certaintie in Religion: seeing mens opinions in matters of Religion be so diuers, that one cannot tell who speaks the truth. Indeed we differ in many points of religion; and so many men, so many diuers opinions: yet the true members of Christ they differ not in the fundamentall points of Religion. And though all the world should differ in opinion, yet it followes not there should be no Religion: but the doctrine taught by the Prophets and Apostles should stand sure, and be the true Religion of God for euer: and the Lord can make men out of it to learne his will, and assure them of the certainty of Religion.

Now followeth the commaundement: *That which thou seest, write in a booke, &c.* This hath two parts: first, *S. Iohn* must write the things he receiue: secondly, he must send them to the seuen famous Churches of Asia. Now the Lord commaunds *Iohn* to write these things in a booke, and he must set downe that which he receiued of God; to send it to the seuen Churches of Asia: because he being now in banishment, and could not come to them and be present with them to instruct them, therefore he must write these in a booke, that so they might be holpen by them. Secondly, he must not only write them in a booke, but send them to these seuen Churches; first, that they might be confirmed and strengthened in the matters of faith, now in the cruell time of their persecution: secondly, that they might keepe these books for the Church of God which is the pillar & ground of truth: first, because it publisheth the word: secondly, because she keepeth the same from time to time, and also giues testimony of the truth of the same. So then, that these Churches might keepe, publish, and giue testimony of these things, he must send them written to them.

Hence we learne, that the word of God written, is an excellent *Ps.* help for the church of God, to edifie the same: else he would neuer haue commaunded *Iohn* to send this booke to the seuen Churches in Asia.

This confutes first the Papists, who hold that the writtē word is but a dead & inky letter, a nose of waxe to be turned any way

secondly, the Anabaptists who looke for reuelations, contemne the written word : but seeing the Lord bids him send it to the seuen Churches in Asia, he sheweth it is an excellent meanes to edifie the Church.

7/2. 2.

We may learne, that the reading of this booke, as of other Scripture, is Gods ordinance, whether it be publike or priuate, and that they must be so vsed as Gods ordinance with reuerence and good conscience. Indeed the word preached is the ordinary meanes to begin faith, and to worke repentance : but the reading of them publickly and priuatly, hath his proper vse to confirme our faith, yea to increase knowledge, faith and repentance in vs.

3.

Write, and send it to the seuen Churches, &c. Here is the third point, namely, that a man in the crosse and persecution may be the deare child of God. *S. Iohn* a famous Apostle and deare seruant of God, yet he is in banishment, and continues a long time from all company of men; yet God reuealeth his wil to him, and maketh him the pen-man of this book, which he giueth to none but them which be his seruants. Then a man may be and continue in banishment, yet be the deare seruant of God. We reason, if a man be in the crosse and persecution, and continue in the same, he is surely out of Gods fauour, but we see the contrary in *Iohn*.

In the end of the verse he setteth downe the names of these seuen Churches in particular; and these seuen places were seuen most famous cities in Asia, in which were planted seuen most excellent Churches of all those parts of the world, and for that cause here are named one by one.

Page 12.

Then I turned backe. Here is his preparation or entrance into the vision. When I heard a voice behind me being loud and great, I turned to see him which deliuered it to me. In the preparation we must consider, first the meanes to moue *Iohn* to attention, namely a voice : secondly the end, to make him attentive, and to inioyne him his dutie, namely, to write, and to send it to the Churches.

Now followeth the second part of his preparation, which is, that he turned backe when he heard this loud and great voice,

to see who it was which gaue the voice.

By this practise of *S. Iohn*, we may learne our duty: for as he dealeth with the man which giues the voice, so must we deale with God. *S. Iohn* heareth a voice, and then he turnes backe to see who it is: so must we do with the Lord; we are all by nature ready to turne from God, and runne from him as fast as we can, by our sinnes. Now when the Lord speaketh to vs by the preaching of the word, when we are running on in another way, we must turne to him, turne our hearts to his wayes, confesse our sinnes to him, that so turning to him we may haue fellowship with God. For vnlesse *S. Iohn* had turned to see the vision and him which spake, he had not scene it: so vnlesse we turne to God speaking in the ministry of his word, and that in time whilst he speaketh to vs, we can haue no fellowship with him, though we heare the word neuer so much.

Now followeth the second part of the vision, which is the representation of Christ his maiesty and magnificence, as he is a Prophet, King and Priest of his Church, and it is set out by a large description of Christ from this twelfth verse to the end of the third chapter. In which description *S. Iohn* sheweth what he receiued touching Christ, partly by hearing, partly by seeing. And herein he describeth Christ, first by his place, *In the midst of the seuen candlestickes*: secondly, by his forme and figure, *Like to the sonne of man*.

First, he describeth Christ by the place, *I saw seuen golden candlestickes, and in the midst one like, &c.* These seuen candlestickes here scene of *Iohn* in a vision, are the seuen Churches in Asia. Now as the Church of God is compared to a candlestick, as Christ expoundeth it in the twentieth verse: so the particular Churches are here called candlestickes, for their resemblance which they haue with candlestickes: for as their property is to beare and hold forth the candle and lamp: even so the Churches of God beare vp and hold forth, and publish the light of the Gospell to the whole world, partly by preaching and maintaining it, partly by professing the faith.

¶ Seeing euery Church is a candlestick (and not a candle) to *Vse*, beare vp and hold forth the lamp and light of the word, because

they haue no light of themselves, but onely can beare vp and hold forth the light, and are but the instruments of the light, the true light being Christ himselfe; then they cannot giue light to mens consciences and hearts, but all that they can do, is to beare the candle, and hold out the light, by instructing and preaching the word, and by their profession of religion.

¶

In that they are compared to candlestickes, we learne that all the true members of Christ are candles, burning and shining lights, placed in the shafts of this candlestick. For though the Ministers must especially be blazing lampes to the people, as *John Baptist* was, *Ioh. 5. 35.* yet also are all true members of Christ these blazing candles to hold forth this light, and shew forth the doctrine of light to the world. *Phil. 2. 15. 16.* Every man in his calling must be a shining candle, and a burning lamp. Now that he may be such a one, he must first haue knowledge of the will and word of God himselfe, then as a blazing candle, send forth the same to others, by teaching and instructing, by godly life and conuersation. We all professe we be members of Christ, and members of the true Church, then we must carie and hold forth these burning lights, hauing light in our selues to send it out to others, by teaching them in our calling, and liuing godly, and giuing good example, and so shine to the world.

To induce vs to this, to carie our selues as burning lampes: first, it is the commandement of God, *Phil. 2. 15.* Every man in his calling must be a blazing light in the middle of a peruerse nation: we must carie our selues free from all sinne, send out our light to all men. For a second reason, marke the fruite and the effect which followeth this carying of our selues as shining lights. When a man is indued with knowledge of Gods will and word, and sends out this light by instructing others, and in a godly example, he winneth many men to the kingdome of heauen. A man if he haue one to hold him out a candle in winter, that he may see his way to go whither he would, he taketh this as a great benefit: how much more is this, to light the way to a blind man euen to the kingdome of heauen? But on the contrary, when men be dimme and darke candles, and liue not in the Church as blazing lights, but in sinne, ignorance, and loose- nesse

nesse of life, hence great hurt and daunger cometh to men with whom they liue. For when a man knoweth the will of God, and yet liueth in sin, he giueth a false direction, and so many follow him euen to the pit of hell: and by his bad example, he draweth men as much as in him lyeth, to eternall destruction. In hauen townes, if a man remoue the night marke, and the candle set to direct the ships, he doth as much as in him lyeth to sinke all the ships: for they hauing wrong direction, runne on rockes and sands, because they go to the light which is not in the right place, and so they misse the channell, and light on rockes and perish. So men in this world, they saile as on the sea, to heauen: now if we by our wicked life remoue the marke and giue wrong direction, they must needs misse the right way, and so come to a false hauen, not heauen but hell. And so then, seeing either by our godly life we draw men to heauen, or by our bad life we carie them to hell, it is our dutie to labour by life and doctrine to giue good direction.

A Similitude

The third reason to moue vs to be burning lights, is the iudgement of God: for he which liueth in the Church, and yet shineth not in teaching others by his good example, he incurreth the iudgement of God. In the temple the lights and candles belonged to the Priest who dressed and trimmed them, & for that purpose he had snuffers and such instruments: now in the Church euery man is a candle, standing in the church as in a sticke: Christ Iesus he is the trimmer and dresser of them, he standeth in the midst of them, he hath his snuffers in his hands, he trimmeth them and dresseth these candles. Now if after three or foure times dressing and snuffing of this candle, still it burneth dim and will not shine out, he will either remoue it out of the sticke, or else he will take and tread it vnder his feet. So those which in the Church do not send out a shining light, the Lord he dresseth and snuffeth them, but if they still burne dimmely, cast not a cleare light in instructing others, and leauing good example, the Lord will cast them out of their places, put them vnder his foot, and cleane extinguish them. In regard of this daunger, euery man in his shaft and place, the Minister in his, the vnlettered man in his, must teach others, giue good exam-

ple, else the issue will be this, the Lord will come in iudgement and stampe it out, and extinguish that light. Nay, very reason requireth this at our hands, seeing we be all lights of this candlestick of the Church, that we should send out light. In winter time we hang out lights, that by them men might be directed to helpe them in their iourney: and shall we be so carefull to helpe men in temporall light, and not much more carefull to helpe them in light toward the kingdome of God? Let then all ignorant and loose liuers, as there be many among vs, let them now begin to shine: for they stand in the place of good lights, they be in the candlestick: they must cease from ignorance and loosenesse of life, and beginne to burne and cast light as good candles, both by doctrine and good example.

If a man should bring a candle in a stick to vs, and we should go about to light it twice or thrice, and it would not take light, we would in anger cast it downe: so Christ if he vse meanes to light these ignorant and loose-living persons many times, if they refuse to be lighted, he in his displeasure will cast them downe out of the candlestick, and not suffer them to take the place of a good candle, but rather tread and stampe them vnder foote.

In the Church of God there be many ignorant persons, many which continue in their ignorance & rebellion, and so continue in sin: but a small number of good blazing lamps. Many hold the place of good lights, but are darke, dimme, and giue no light, let these feare Gods iudgements. Would any be true candles, burning and blazing lights? let them first get knowledge in the word and will of God, furnish and replenish their hearts with knowledge, and after practise the same faithfully in obedience, in leading a godly life, shining to other in holy example, exhorting and instructing them, that so shining forth clearly and chearefully, Christ standing in the midst of the lights, may like and allow of them. For vnlesse we shine thus in this candlestick, to wit, the Church of God, where we haue our places, we shall neuer haue light, nor ioy in the kingdome of heauen: but if we do, we shall then shine as the Sunne, cleare and faire for euermore.

Golden

Golden candlestickes. That is, made of gold: so called for two causes. The Church of God is compared to a candlestick of gold: first, because as gold is most excellent of all mettals: so the Church of God is the most excellent of all societies and companies of men. All companies and societies of men, in the familie, towne, citie, kingdome, commonweales, they be all the ordinance of God, and excellent in their kinds: but the Church of God is aboue all these, it is most excellent, no societie cometh neare it: first, because in the Church there is saluation to be had and obtained, but in none of these societies of men it is to be had, as they be societies of men, but as they be Churches, or true members of the Church.

2 It is a most excellent societie, because this is the end of all other societies, they be all ordained to maintaine this, as the chiefe; and this euen the Church of God, is the end of them all.

3 The Church it beautifieth and adorneth all other societies, because herein is their honour and preferment, in that they be either Churches, or members of the true Church.

Seeing the Church is the chiefe and most excellent societie *vs. 1.* in this world, we must aboue all things haue speciall care to become members of this societie. Men haue care and labour to become members of those townes which be in corporations, and haue freedoms aboue other: then much more should we labour to be members of that societie which is most excellent, to be true members of the Church of God.

Seeing this is the chiefe societie, and all referred to main- *vs. 2.* taine the Church of God, it must be our speciall care to maintaine that Church; euery man in his calling, as the King, Prince, and Magistrates, the Ministers in their callings, yea euery man in his particular calling must seeke to preferue this societie.

Seeing this societie adorneth the other, & giueth them their *vs. 3.* beautie, we should labour to bring all societies to this. Men in families must seeke to make their familie a Church, or a member of the true Church: they which rule a towne, to make it a true member of the Church, and to make it an ecclesiasticall societie: so Kings to make their kingdome a Church, & member

ber of the Catholike Church, because al other societies without the Church, are but as places without light, and without the candlestick to hold vp: and without this light, they be in darknesse and the shadow of death. It is compared to a golden stick, because it is most precious to God, none so deare, none so neare to God, as this societie of the Church. Christ therefore to expresse how deare it is, saith it is a seale to his hand, and a signe on his right arme. *Can. 8. 6. Zachary* calls the Church the apple of Gods eye, shewing it is most deare in Gods sight, as precious as the apple of the eye, which is most tender to vs. *Psalm. 45.* it is compared to the Queene in a vesture of gold: nay, no societie is so precious and deare to Christ as this, seeing he hath shed his owne heart blood, euen the blood of God, to redeeme his Church.

In the midst of the seven golden candlestickes. Christ is in the midst of them, that is, he is present with his Church continually in all times: he hath continuall care of it, to gather his Church, and being gathered, to preserue it and defend it from all her enemies.

Vs. 1.

Seeing Christ is in the midst of his Church present to gather and defend it: then the supremacy of the Church of Rome, whereby they will haue one head of all the Churches on earth, is needlesse: for Christ is present, gathering and defending his Church at all times: then there needeth no generall Vicar. In the presence of a king, they of a commission cease, though they were assigned before: and if any should be so impudent as to take on him the office of a king in his presence, all men would condemne him: so though Christ had giuen this office to the Pope, yet seeing he is present at all times in his Church, to gather and defend it, the generall gouernement of the Pope is needlesse, and it is extreame arrogancy to take on him the office of Christ in his presence.

Vs. 2.

Seeing Christ is in the midst of his Church, we must do as *Enoch, Gen. 5. 22.* walke with or before Christ: when we take any thing in hand, do any thing in word or deed, we must do all in Christs presence. We must do all we do, that we may haue approbation of Christ, for he is in the midst of his Church, to looke to it, to defend it, he seeth what we do; therefore do all that he may

may like of it, and approue it. That we may do so, we must haue direction for that we do out of his word: and if we be able to walke before Christ, we shall be able to do many duties to him, and be vnblameable in this wicked world.

The second argument whereby Christ is described, is his forme and shape *Like the son of man*. Hence some gather, that it is not Christ, but some Angell which is described; but they are deceiued, for he is called *α* and *ω*, the first and the last, and he that was first dead then aliue, which belongs to Christ alone. *Like the sonne of man*, but more significant it is in the originall, *Like a sonne of man*: if it be translated, The sonne of man, then Christ must be vnderstood: but in the originall it is, *A sonne of man*, according to the phrase of the old Testament, where when they would signifie one that was a man, they called him, *A sonne of man*, that is, man like a man in forme and shape.

Christ is said to be *like a sonne of man*, not that he appeared to *Iohn* in his manhood, for that was in heauen, but in a likenesse, appearance and resemblance of his manhood: and as he doth not appeare here, so in no place after his ascension he appeareth in his true manhood. *Stephen* saw the sonne of man stand at the right hand of God, *Act. 7.* but that was in heauen: and *Paul* heard him speake, *Act. 9.* and being rauished, *1. Cor. 13.* but then also he was in heauen.

And this Christ doth to a speciall end, to shew that whereas men much regard and esteeme his bodily presence, as his Apostles and friends did, who had too great a desire of it, we must not seeke to haue earthly familiaritie with him, but we must lift vp our hearts by faith, and so haue spirituall familiaritie and acquaintance with him. And so he biddeth *Mary*, touch me not, *Iohn 20.* being not yet glorified, to checke her too much desire of his bodily presence: but he would haue her and vs to lift vp our hearts by faith, and haue spirituall familiaritie and acquaintance with him in heauen.

Then hence, the defence of consubstantiation and reall presence of the body of Christ is in the sacrament, is but needlesse, seeing it is sufficient Christ is present in spirit, not bodily any more, but we must lift vp our harts to heauen, and there for cuer

liue and rest in him.

The Papists gather of this, in that Christ appeared after his ascension in the appearance and forme of a man, that they may make the image of Christ, who being God appeared in the forme of a man. Secondly the Father, who is figured by an old man, *Dan. 9.* and the holy Ghost in the forme of a Doue, they hold they may picture the, not in any forme but in that they appeared. *Answer.* It is not vnlawfull for vs to haue the pictures of the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost as they appeared in forme, as Christ in a man, the Father in an old man, the holy Ghost in a Doue, to illustrate and set out the history: but we deny and hold it vnlawfull to haue any of them, or the picture of Christ (if it were to be had) to religious vses, to put vs in remembrance of Christ, to worship God, in, or at, or by it: for thus to worship God is flat against the second commaundement.

Clothed with a garment downe to the feete. In these words following, is described the garment and attire wherein Christ appeared to *Iohn*. The first part of his attire, is a long robe or garment down to the feet. He appeared in this kind of garment, first to shew he was the high Priest of the new testament after his ascension, to do the the office of the high Priest, because this was one of the garments which the high Priest vsed when he offered sacrifice. So Christ hauing offered himselfe on the crosse, he is still high Priest for vs, to make intercession for vs to his father. Secondly, he appeared in this kind of attire, to shew he is the Prince and King of peace, because this long robe and garment is in all nations, where it is vsed, a signe of peace: so Christ hauing this garment, is not a King of war but of peace. *Esay. 9.* Thirdly, to shew he excelled in wisdom and counsell: for this garment in all nations which vse it, was giuen to them which excell in wisdom and counsell: so Christ here is clothed with this long stole and robe, to shew that he excelleth in the spirit of wisdom and counsell, because the spirit of wisdom is in him without measure. *Esay 9. 6. Col. 2.*

Vse.

Hence for the attire of our body, we learne that it must be suitable and answerable to those good things which be or ought to be in our hearts, as this garment of Christ, to shew he was high.

high Priest: secondly, that he was King of peace: lastly, that he excelled in wisdom and counsell. So our attire should be such, which may signifie the vertues which be in vs, as our knowledge, obedience, sobrietie, temperancy, humilitie, and all the good gifts and graces of God: we must not onely shew out the graces of our hearts by word, but euen our attire must set out what they be. And as we must be candles, in teaching and instructing in life and conuersation: so we must shine and shew forth the vertues of our heart by our attire. But alas our practise is contrary, for our apparell is now futable to all our corruption and vices of our hearts, to set out our pride, to preach to the world our lightnesse and loosenesse of life, the vanity and folly of our hearts: so that if a man see one go, though he neuer be acquainted with him, neuer spake to him, yet he may know his fondnesse, folly, loosenesse of life, pride and corruption of his heart by his apparell.

The second part of his attire, is, that he was *girded about with a golden girdle about the breast*: which is to shew, that Christ was ready prepared to do all the offices of a Mediator for vs: for the girding vp of the body, the binding of mens apparell to them, is a signe of diligence and care to do ones dutie; as the not girding of the clothes, but to leaue the loose, is a signe of negligēce and carelesnesse. Then seeing Christ is girded vp, it sheweth he is ready prepared to do the office of a Mediator to all men: and so Christ whilest he was on the earth he shewed this, he saued all the poore sinners which came to him; and since his resurrection he is not negligent, but ready prepared, girded to do the office of a Mediator to all true penitent sinners.

This must be a singular comfort to all which haue any sparke of grace, that Christ he is ready to attend on them, to do the office of a Mediator for them. When we be in affliction & crosse, he is ready prepared at our elbowes to deliuer vs and comfort vs: when we be ready to die, he is not farre off, but stands by vs, ready to cary our soules to heauen; in all things he is ready to all the workes of a Mediator, to helpe vs in all the workes of our salvation. Christ he is not like *Pharaohs* Butler, who promised *Ioseph* to remember him, being promoted to honour out of

prison, but after being exalted in *Pharaohs* house, forgot him, *Gen. 40.* But Christ he is still now as readie as euer he was in earth to helpe vs, and to do all the workes of a Mediator for vs.

vs.

Then we must imitate Christ, and haue our loines girded vp. *Luk. 12.* we must be prepared and made readie to do all our duties, to call vpon the name of God, to giue him thanks, to renew our faith and repentance daily: yea euery day make our selues readie to die or to liue, and to be alwaies readie to do all the workes concerning our saluation, and at all times to carie our selues so, as we be readie to enter into heauen at any time. But we neuer thinke of this, we are readie to no good thing, we neuer thinke of death till it knocke at the doore. Oh let vs labor to become good followers of Christ, hauing our Ioynes girded vp, readie prepared to all good workes.

About the paps: not the belly, but breast. Some thinke (and not vnfitly) to shew, that his thoughts and affections which came from the heart, they be most perfect, ranged in, not subiect to any sinne, but guided by the spirit, which with full measure dwelleth in him bodily.

And his head as white as wooll. Now *S. Iohn* describeth Christ by the parts of his bodie: first, his head is as white as wooll or snow, which is to shew the eternitie of Christ: for though as he was man he had a beginning; yet as he is God, he is eternall: he is the auncient of dayes, *Dan. 9.* and when all things began, he was before.

vs.

Seeing our Sauiour Christ vseth this hoarinesse and whitenes of the old gray head, to set out his eternitie and euer-being, he would shew the excellencie and honor of aged men, of the old gray headed man, which other younger want: and for this, he compareth the old gray head to almond trees which are alwaies white. *Eccles. 12. 5.* and *Prou. 16. 31.* it is compared to a siluer crowne, not made by man, but made and placed by the hand of God on the aged mans head. This excellencie of the hoarie head is in this, that he beareth in his person the image of Gods eternitie, before all younger men: he standeth in the roome of God, to shew Gods eternitie to men: namely, in this old and white head of his,

Now

Now seeing the aged man hath this excellencie aboue young men, he must be reuerenced; young men must rise to him. *Leuit.* 19. and we must in their hoarie head learne the image of Gods eternitie. They which be such, which in regard of their age haue this excellencie aboue others, they must excell others in knowledge and experience, in wisdom and holinesse, 1. *Iob.* 2. 13. I write to you fathers, which know the father which hath bene from the beginning: shewing, he taketh it for granted, that aged men which be fathers, should haue knowledge in the will of God. Secondly, they must exceed others in holinesse of life. God is holy, they beare his image, therefore they must (seeing they beare his image aboue others) go before yong men in holinesse. And therefore *Salomon*, *Prov.* 16. 31. compareth old age to a siluer crowne ioyned with righteoufnesse, which, when they be ioyned together, old age indeed is a glorious ornament. Then men must take heed that old age be no disgrace vnto them, nor dishonour, but an ornament and commendation. But alas, miserable is our dayes, when young men excell old, in knowledge and wisdom, in godlinesse of life and conuersatio, and other gifts of the Spirit: but it should not be so, but as the aged must go before them in preferment and excellencie, so they should go before them in wisdom, knowledge, experience and godlinesse. And if in these which weare the siluer crowne on their heads, there be found finnes abounding, and loosenesse of life, it is much more dishonor in them then the younger, though in neither commendable. And it is not enough for old men to say, their memorie, conceipt and knowledge faile them: for this sheweth they haue liued a bad and loose life, and mis-spent their younger age: but they must labour, that with their siluer crowne on their head, they may haue a siluer life in heart and hand.

And his eyes were as a flame of fire. *S. Iohn* goeth on to describe Christ in vision by the parts of his bodie: now in handling these parts, though no man can set downe certainly what the holy Ghost intendeth in euery point, yet we must consider what is most probable in the word of God. *And his eyes, &c.* He addeth these, to signifie two things: first, to shew that our Mediator is of a most piercing sharpe, and quicke sight, so that

he beholdeth all things in earth, euen the secrets of our hearts, for he hath fierie and piercing eyes: and as fire entreth and pierceth all mettals, so Christ by his fierie eye pierceth into the substance and secrets of the hearts. Now it is necessarie that the head of the Church should be so sharpe of sight, that he might behold the whole Church, see all the enterprises of the diuell, and the estate of all his children.

Vse. 1.

Seeing Christ is of so piercing and fierie a sight, that he seeth the very secrets and thoughts of our hearts, we must haue care not onely of our words and actions, but of ordering our thoughts and affections: for Christ pierceth into our hearts and seeth them: therefore we must looke they be in order that he may approue them. It is true, thoughts and inward affections, with men beare no action, because men know not the heart and affections: but it is not so with God, he seeth the least inclination and purpose of our hearts, and he keepeth court of iudgement, not onely for words and actions, but for thoughts and affections. Therefore men must take heed they be well ordered, and so of Christ approued, that for the they be not condemned.

Vse. 2.

Christ he seeth our hearts and our very inclinations: then we must in matters of religion be indeed that we seeme to be: for though we can bleare mens eyes with outward profession, and they can go no further: yet the Lord he hath fierie and piercing eyes, and seeth our hearts, and how we be but hypocrites if we be not indeed that we seeme outwardly to be. Yet men must stay and suspend their rash iudgement, and not for the professing of religion iudge men to be hypocrites: for God alone searcheth their hearts.

Luk 19. 27.

Secondly, he is thus described, to shew, he is full of anger and iudgement, and readie to take vengeance of his enemies: that is, of them which will not giue themselves, and turne to him by repentance, in obeying his will and word. For though Christ be a Redeemer and Sauour, yet he is also a iudge, & in indignation will execute his iudgement on his enemies, euen vpon all that refuse to haue him to rule ouer them: as he saith, *Those mine enemies which would not haue me to rule ouer them, bring them that I may kill them.*

This

This may serue to awake many drowfie and secure professors: for men now in this barren age liue in sinne and ignorance, neuer thinke of the duties of faith and repentance, take pleasure in sinne; it is meate and drinke to them to liue in securitie: not one of a thousand turneth to God by heartie repentance. Let these know, that though they liue closely in sin, yet Christ be-holdeth them, not as a Redeemer, but as a Iudge, with sterie and piercing eyes, readie to execute iudgement on them for their sinnes. They then must consider their owne estate in time, and turne to God, lest that they going on in their sinnes, and sport-ing in securitie, Christ come vnawares, and cut them off in his anger: for it is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of God.

And his feet like to fine brasse. The word signifieth brasse, Ver. 15: which is shining, for substance durable & pure, the very choice and excellentest kind of brasse. This he addeth, to signifie the inuincible power of Christ, that he is able to encounter, nay, hath already encountred with sinne and Satan, wounded them, and bruised their heads to powder: for his feete are strong and durable, he is of power to ouercome his enemies, to tread them vnder foot, and grind them to powder: and not onely in his owne person, but in his members, he is most powerfull.

Seeing he hath brasen feet, strong and durable to ouercome his enemies and tread them vnder foot, this is a singular com-fort to the children of God, who if they be exercised with any temptation of Satan, or with any affliction and grieve, they must not be discouraged, but seeke to Christ their head, he will in vs (as he hath before in his owne person) bruise the serpents head, and breake it to powder. Let vs then put our cause to Christ, and let him haue the whole ordering and dispensation of it: so, if sin and corruption hang on vs, vex and oppresse vs, we must flie to him, make him acquainted with it, seeke helpe from him, and we shall doubtlesse find it weakened and wounded, nay bruised to peeces, by his helpe. If we see the terrors of death, we must not feare too much: for Christ is strong, and able to ouercome death, nay he encountred with sinne and Satan on the crosse, ouercame him there, and went downe with him to his owne denne and cabine, and there vanquished death: so that he hath

subdued and brought him vnder foote, and made him his foot-stoole.

2.

And as this is a comfort to the godly, so it should be a terror to the wicked, who without repenting liue in their sinnes: for Christ hath a foote of brasse, he wil bruisse them in peeces, make them his foote-stoole, and with his brazen foot grind them to powder. Then they which be as yet enemies to Christ, must turne to him, leaue their old maister Satan, come to him, else he will breake them to nothing, by his strong and brazen foote.

Burning as in a furnace. The feete of God as of men, in the Scriptures often signifie his or their wayes: so here the feet of Christ signifie his wayes or workes. *Burning as in a furnace:* this sheweth the perfection of Christs wayes, they be vncorrupt: euen as brasse purified in the fire, so be they, most pure, most vnspotted, without all dross; all his wayes, his counsels and works, either of creation or preservation, all are without fault. *The way of God is vncorrupt, the word of the Lord is tried in the fire: he is a shield to all that trust in him.* Psal. 118. 30.

Vse.

Seeing all his wayes are pure and most holy, we must speake and thinke of them with reuerence, euen of his secret iudgements whereof we know no cause nor reason; we must reuerence them, and acknowledge that they are pure of themselves. In matters of Religion there is a learned ignorance, whereof this is not the least point, to content our selues with his wayes, and not curiously to search into those things which he hath not reuealed in his word: but though they be against reason to man, acknowledge them as holy & true, with reuerence, for all Christs waies be holy. The blind man cannot iudge of the light, because he seeth it not: no more can blind man (such as all be) iudge of workes hidden with God.

Gen. 20.

The Lord bids *Abimelech* giue *Sarah* to *Abraham*, else he wil punish him and all his: what reason is this in mans sight? nay it seemeth cruelty, to punish his seruants for him. So *Achan* he sinned, *Ios. 7.* and the people are plagued. *David* sinned, *2. Sam. 12.* the child died: and he sinned againe, *2. Sam. 24.* the people is plagued. What reason can mā giue of these? These seeme al contrary to reason in mans iudgement; but we must reuerence the counsels.

counsel of God, as good, pure, and holy, though we see no cause at all of them. The Lord hath determined to saue some, to cast off other some: now this seemeth crueltie to man: nay some hold it an action of crueltie, that the Lord should withhold his mercy from one, and shew it to another. But they sinne, seeing it is the doctrine of Gods word, that he in his good will and pleasure, hath determined to saue some, to reiect other for his owne pleasure: though we see no reason at all of this, we must reuerence it, and hold it the truth of Gods most holy counsell.

And his voice as the sound of many waters. This he addeth for two causes: first, to shew the loudnesse and greatnes of his voice, because this voice of Christ in his word hath gone through the whole world: for the doctrine of Christ hath bene sounded in all parts of the world. Secondly, to shew the power, force and efficacy of this voice in the eares of his creatures. Christ before all things were, but spake the word, and at his word all things were made. *Lazarus* lay rotting in his graue, yet he heard the voice of Christ, as of a thousand trumpets sounding in his eares, and rose vp: nay the bodies of men being dead fixe thousand yeares, euen those that heare the voice of Christ, being a loud and great voice, a powerfull and effectfull voice.

Seeing this voice of Christ is so loud and powerfull a voice *vs. 2.* that the dead are able to heare it: this shewes the securitie and deadnesse of those men, which though they heare it dayly sounding and crying in their eares, as the noise of many waters, yet they will not, as did the dead bodie of *Lazarus*, heare and stand vp, and come forth of their graues of sinne, but still snort in securitie and rot in their sinnes. This argueth our great drowfines, that the dead which haue layné six thousand yeares, shall at this voice rise and awake, and we hearing it both loud and powerfull, and publike in our eares, will not put vp our head nor out heart, not seeke to get one foot out of the graue of sinne and securitie.

And he had. Here *S. Iohn* describeth him by his parts, and *vs. 16.* the properties of euery part. *In his right hand seuen starres:* that is, seuen Angels, seuen Ministers of the seuen churches of Asia. The Ministers are compared to starres: first, because as starres send

out light to men on earth; so the Ministers ought to giue light to men, euen spirituall light, by doctrine taught by them, and by conuersatio of life among them. Secondly, they be compared to stars, because as the stars haue their continuall abode in heauen, neuer descend downe: so the Ministers of the word especially should haue their conuersation in heauen. It is the dutie of all, but more specially of the Ministers, in regard of their callings: first by seeking their owne saluation: secondly, by seeking the saluation of others: by which two they must haue their conuersation in heauē, though they haue their bodies in earth; thirdly, because they shall be honoured of God in heauen, as the starres: for *Dan. 12.* they which do their dutie, they *shall shine like starres in the firmament.*

They be in Christs *right hand*: that is, all regiment and gouernement in matters of the Church belongs to Christ, he alone hath the whole disposition and ordering of the ministry: seeing he alone is head of the Church, and the Ministers they be in his right hand: he rules and raignes in his church, he careth for it and looketh to it.

1st. Seeing these starres be in Christs *right hand*: this shewes that the choosing & furnishing of the ministers of the word, belongs to Christ, *Eph. 4.* he giueth them their gifts and places: then we ought in this last age to pray the Lord to send out laborers into his haruest, that so his children might be gathered, and an end made of these miserable dayes.

2. *He holds these seuen starres in his right hand.* Whereby we see, he giueth them defence and protection, so long as they be faithful in their callings. He carieth them in his right hand: & though they haue sundry discouragements, yet seeing Christ he ordereth their ministry, and disposeth of it, if they be faithfull, nothing should hinder their course, nothing should cut them off from their duty, neither the want of obediēce in them to whom they preach and labour, nor seeing that fruit they should; nor the injuries of the enemies of their profession; nor any thing else.

3. Seeing they be in his *right hand*: this sheweth the excellency of this calling of the ministry. Idle men esteeme it most base, & accept of it as of a meane calling, and so discourage many: but in the

The first is, the separation of bodie and soule, when the bodie is laid in the graue, the soule conueyed to the place of torments. The second is, when a sinner in this life by the word is wounded and smitten, and so receiueh in his heart a deadly wound. The third degree is at the end of this life, at the last iudgement, whē soule and bodie shall go into hell fire: for euen a sinner receiueh his deadly wound in this life, which is the first steppe to hell and eternall death in the life to come.

In the inflicting and giuing of this wound, there be three actions of Christ required, which he worketh in the hearts of the wicked by the doctrine of the law and the Gospell. The first is, to reueale to them their sinnes, all their pride, rebellion, hypocrisie, the damnable corruptions of their hearts, and all their sinnes against the first and second Table. 1. *Cor.* 14. 24. 25. If in the Church all prophecie, there come in one which beleueh not, he is rebuked of all, because they iudge him an hypocrite, and so the secrets and corruptions of his heart are laid open and discouered by the word preached. The second action of Christ is this, he after reuealeth to them the wrath and curse of God against sinne, his indignation against the breakers of the law: and for this cause the law is called the killing law, because it sheweth iudgement without mercie for the transgressions of the law. Thirdly, Christ by the word preached sharpeneth the sting of conscience, maketh it awake, and terrifieth a man when he heareth or remembreth the word, and the curse denounced against sinners. So *Felix* when *Paul* preached to him of iustice and temperancie, he fainted and trembled, the word was a two edged sword of the spirit to wound his conscience with terrour and feare. So *Dan. 5.* *Belshazzar* seeing but an hand writing, he quaketh for feare, the word of God came into his mind, and made his conscience accuse him, and his knees smote together for feare.

So then by this we see how Christ killeth the wicked, by reuealing their sinnes, shewing the wrath and anger of God against sinne and sinners which repent not, and the curse of the law: and also by sharpening the sting of conscience, to wound them and strike them at the heart; and so they by this haue the first

first wound of eternall death, Though the Lord may in mercie recover them of this wound, yet of themselues they be in the estate of death; and vnlesse they repent, they are in the first step to eternall death. For those horrors and feares which come into a mans heart in regard of Gods wrath and iudgements, seuered from grace, are no grace, but the first wound to eternall death, vnlesse the Lord giue grace.

Seeing Christ carieth the two edged sword of the Spirit in his mouth, whereby he woundeth his enemies with a deadly wound at the heart: then when we see any which cometh to heare the word, and after rebelleth, stormeth, and rageth against the same, being wounded in conscience therewith, we must not be displeased with it, but pitie his case, seeing he is wounded at the heart with a deadly wound: and he in this case is in the first steppe to eternall death, vnlesse the Lord recover him of this wound. Pfe. 2.

In those Churches and places where the word hath bene long preached, and the people remaine in blindness and ignorance, and vnreformed, we must in these take pitie on them, seeing this is a heauie iudgement of God on them: for these are wounded with a deadly wound by the sword of the spirit, because the word hath bene long and often preached to them without profit: and the word it neuer returneth emptie, but either saueth or destroyeth, woundeth or healeth them. So that though men may liue ciuilly before men, making a faire shew, yet if they be vnreformed and liue in ignorance, these are but dead men in the sight of God: the word hath giuen them the first deadly wound, therefore we must pitie their estate. If we come into the field, see an hundred men lye wounded, and gushing out blood, some in the head, some in the sides, and some in the feet, we cannot but be exceedingly moued: so in the church of God many are vnreformed in obedience and repentance: and though we cannot see their bloudie wounds with bodily eyes, yet we may see them lye wallowing in the bloud of ignorance and securitie, of impenitencie and wickednesse, therefore we must pitie their estate: for they be dead men indeed, seeing they be not reuiued by the word in reformation of life and obe- 2.

dience: for the word either quickeneth or killeth,

Seeing the word without grace killeth, we must not content our selues with it, but seeke to feele the worke of the Spirit, peace of conscience, and reformation of life by the word. Let vs then by a liuely faith labour to apply Christ by the word, to lay hold on him and his righteousness, so that we can say, we liue not, but Christ in vs. But this word hath another action in the elect children of God, which though it be manifold, yet all tend to further and procure their saluation. The first work of it in these, is to wound deeply, and to kill the corruption of mans nature in his heart, with a deadly wound, that it neuer recouer againe. Yet though it wound a man, it killeth not the person, as in the wicked, but onely the corruption of his heart, and quickeneth the person to Christ, killeth him in regard of rebellion and vnablese. We are sacrifices to be offered to God, therefore we must be killed, not in our bodies and soules, but in our corruptions, affections and rebellions. That we may be killed, the two edged sword of the Spirit is required, which giueth our corruption the deadly wound, and cutteth vp the root. Since the second action after our conuersion & change is this, the word of God must cut and pare the remnants of our corruption, by lessening and weakening of it daily. *Ioh. 15.* As the husbandman cutteth, loppeth and pareth off all branches that beare no fruite: so the word of God cutteth and pareth away the remnants of corruptions in our hearts, that so our hearts may bring forth more fruite. Thirdly, the word of God serueth to keepe his people and children in awe and subiection, and therefore Christ holdeth the scepter of the word in his mouth, that though the wicked will not be kept in awe, yet his elect may tremble and feare at the lifting vp of the same. Amongst men if many be fighting, let the Magistrate but hold vp the sword of Iustice, euery man yeeldeth and putteth his sword into his sheath: and shall not we much more cease from sinne, and feare, when Christ the King of heauen and earth, holdeth out the scepter of his word? And if any refuse to be subiect, and to obey the Magistrate, he is counted a rebel: if men refuse to obey the scepter of Christ, shall they not be so accounted?

So then by these actions we see the power of the word, it killeth corruptions in our hearts, pareth it and the remnants of it, and it keepeth men in awe and subiection. Yet it differeth in the wicked, and in the godly: in the wicked, it maketh them feare, and woundeth them to death, destroying both soule and bodie: in the godly, it woundeth them indeed, not in their persons, but in the corruptions of their hearts. It maketh vs fit to encounter with the diuell, and to vanquish him in all his temptations if it be vsed with knowledge.

Seeing the word of God serueth to kill our corruptions, we when we heare the word, must receiue and beleue the same, not onely when it is deliuered in generall, but applyed in particular: though it touch vs and wound our hearts, we must suffer it, and reioyce in it: for that is the first steppe to health, to haue our corruptions ripped vp and touched. When the sword of the spirit entreth to our hearts, it will ransacke euery nooke and secret corner: then we must reioyce in this blessing of God, suffer it gladly, seeing it is the onely meanes to come to life. If one be sicke of a Fistula, he will suffer the Chirurgeon to rippe and saunce him, to search euery part of the wound: and shall not we suffer the Phisition of the word to display, to lay open, to ransacke and search the corruption of our hearts, seeing that is the onely way to recouer health. For we cannot liue to God till we die to our selues and to our sinnes: we cannot possibly die to our sinnes, till our corruptions be destroyed, and all our sinnes killed and wounded to death.

In his mouth. Other Kings carie their Scepter in their hands, but he in his mouth, to shew, that no doctrine must be receiued of vs, vnlesse it proceed from his mouth: for he receiued his Fathers will, deliuereth it to his Church, to his Prophets, and Apostles, and they to vs.

And his face shone, &c. For as the Sunne is to the world, so is Christ to his Church. Now as the Sun performeth two duties to men, so doth Christ: the first is, to giue light and drive away darkenesse, to take away the night, and bring the day: so Christ he is the Sunne of righteousness, *Malach. 3.* He giueth the light of knowledge to his seruants, he sendeth the light of the

word which can dispel darknes, and enlighten his people in the knowledge of his will and word.

Ps. 1. Then are we bound to labour about all things for knowledge of his will and word. First, when the day dawneth, we set open our doores and windowes, to receiue the light and comfort of the same : now Christ is in the midst of his Church, he sendeth light, he shineth clearly, being the Sonne of righteousness: then we must open the doores of our hearts, and the windows of our soules and consciences, to receiue his light and comfort into vs.

2. Seeing Christ giueth light by his word, we must in all our life be guided and directed by that light. We are pilgrimes, going through a vale of misery and darknes, Christ is the light, he shineth as a blazing torch : we must then do all our duties by direction of this light, we must in all our wayes haue our eyes fixed in this word which is the sonne of light and direction.

2. Pet. 1. end.

The action of the Sunne is to warme and comfort dead and cold bodies, and to reuiue them : as we see in the spring time, it reuiues those creatures which before were as dead with cold : so Christ giueth not onely light but life, he giueth spiritual comfort to bodies frozen for cold, he comforts them & reuiues them by his spirituall heate, and for this is called the Sunne of righteousness, comforting our cold and frozen hearts in sinne and iniquitie.

Ps. Then we must labour about all things, to be partakers of this spirituall life and comfort, which cometh by the spirituall heate of Christ. As men will in winter go into the Sunne, to feele the heate of the beames: so must we come out of our sinnes, get into the sun-shine of Christ, that his beames may streame vpon vs plenteously, to haue life conueyed to our benumbed and dead consciences. We will seeke to haue honour, riches, preferments, and pleasures of this life, but *Ps. 44.* we should desire the Sunne of righteousness to shine on vs with the beames of mercy, to haue him quicken our dead hearts with the heate of his holy spirit.

That we may haue this spiritual life, we must die our selues ere we can liue to the Lord : we must first be killed ere we be made aliue. If we wold liue to God, we must suffer the two edged sword
to.

to pierce to the heart, to cut vp and cut off all our corruptions, to suffer it to enter into vs, to ransack our rebellious harts, and to be thrust to the hilt, that so it may diuide betweene the spirit & the flesh, pare off al the rottē flesh of corruptiō in vs: for when we are killed to our selues, & discouraged in regard of our own sins, we are most fit to be made aliue to God. A body which is almost dead for cold, is the most capable of heate: and when we are thus cast downe in regard of our sins, then we must labor to haue the comfortable beames of Christ to shine in our hearts, to warme and to quicken vs, and his fauourable countenance to shine on vs: which if we haue, though we haue neither honour, riches nor preferment, yet we haue enough: and if we want that heate, all things else are nothing.

The third worke or action of the sun is to discouer all things. *Vs.* In the night nothing appeareth, all haue one forme; but when the Sunne cometh with his light, all things appeare, and a man may in the beames see the very mores: so Christ the chiefe sunne seeth all things, and he will discouer all: nothing so secret which is hid from him, nothing so close which his eye seeth not: he knoweth, and he can and will discouer all mens actions, yea their secret thoughts.

Seeing Christ knoweth all our thoughts, so as he can make the manifest and open: note, that though we may liue so as men cannot iudge of our hypocrisie, yet Christ seeth our dealings: & as the sunne is manifest to our eye, so our actions are cleare to his eye. This should make vs take heed to all our waies and workes, that we do or thinke nothing but as in his presence; for we cannot blind his eyes, but he seeth it euen as clearely as we see the light of the sunne. If men of occupations would consider this, that all their actions are cleare to Christ, they would not commit so much crueltie and iniustice; there would not be so many sins practised of vs dayly as there are.

And when I saw him, I fel at his feet as dead. In these seuenteenth *Vers. 17. 18.* & eighteenth verses, *Iohn* proceeds to describe our sauior Christ as God gaue him a vision, by other arguments, that is, by his actions. The first action is contained in these seuenteenth and 18. verses, which is a confirmation of S. *Iohn*, being greatly afraid:

and this confirmation is the whole matter and substance of these two verses. In this note two things: first, the occasion: secondly, the meanes. The occasion mouing Christ to confirme *S. Iohn*, in the second part of the seuenteenth verse: the meanes, in the end of the seuenteenth verse & in the eighteenth. The occasion was an exceeding feare of death, which made *Iohn* as dead, as appeareth by Christs comforting of him.

In this feare note 3 things: first, the cause: secondly, the effect of it: thirdly, the kind of feare. The cause in these words, *And when I saw him, &c.* which was the appearance of Christ to *Iohn* in his maiestie and glory, which made *Iohn* exceedingly feare.

S. Iohn seeing the maiestie and glory of Christ, he is exceedingly afraid and astonished as a dead mā. We all by nature since the fall of *Adam* are fearefull sinners. Before he fell he walked & talked with God face to face, but after his fall he fled and hid himselfe, he could not brooke his presence, because he had sinned: and since his fall, mans frailtie and weaknes is such, that he cannot abide the presence and maiestie of God: but as *Mannaah* *Iudg. 13. 22.* seeing an Angell of God, said, *We shall surely die, because we haue seene God*: shewing that the presence of God, of his maiestie, is terrible to sinfull man: euen so it is with all men.

Now seeing we haue lost our first estate, we must labor continually to haue the image of Satan abolished in vs, and the image of God daily renewed: we must become new creatures, & seeke aboue all things to haue our former fellowship with God which we lost in *Adam*: for in this fellowship with God stands all true happinesse and ioy eternall.

Vñ 1.

Seeing it feared *Iohn* that he was as dead, we see that the feeling of the presence of God, of his maiestie and glory, it is a singular meanes to humble man, to cast him downe, and make him know he is nothing in himselfe. So soone as *Iohn* perceived and saw the presence of Christ, he was as dead, & fell at his feet. So *Abraham*, the more he perceived the glory of God, the more he humbled himselfe, confessing he was dust and ashes. And *Peter* *Luke 5. 8. 9. 10.* seeing but a glimmering of Christs maiestie and might, he bids him depart fro him, he was a sinner. So *Esa. 6. 2.* the Angels couer theselues with their wings, with three they coue,
red

red their face, and with 3. their feet, as feareing and not able to behold his maiesty, as cōfessing they be nothing but sin in the selues.

We see the great goodnes of God in the ministry of his word, for though he might speake to vs by his own self, and so that we could not abide to heare his voice, but should be as dead men, yet he in mercy speaketh to vs by sinfull men like to our selues and familiarly: then we must know and learne to acknowledge his mercy, and be thankfull for it.

Seeing it astonished *S. Iohn*, we see that euen holy and righteous men cannot abide the presence of Christ his maiestie and glory: much lesse can the works of righteous men stand before his iust iudgement, or answer to his iustice: for the person must be first accepted before the worke can be accepted: now if a righteous man cannot abide the presence of Christ, no more can his worke. Then damnable is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, who will haue men to stand at Gods bar, and bring their workes as part of their iustification, but our workes be but in part holy, no more then we be our selues but in part iust.

Now followeth the effect of this feare in *S. Iohns* body: *He fel at his feete as dead.* It was not a small but a great feare, which astonished his senses, made him as a dead man. Phisitions say, that the mind followeth the constitution and temperature of the body, but we may here as truly say, the body followeth the temperature and constitution of the mind: for the mind can worke that on the body, which other diseases can worke: it can cast men into a swoound, make the body cold, and many other things which diseases work in the body. So *Ahab* being grieued, and feareing he could not get *Naboths* vineyard, was sick and almost dead. So then affections of love, and feare, and hatred, &c. can change & kill the body: therefore the body followeth the temperature and constitution of the mind. Againe, we see diseases are not alwayes to be cured by art and phisicke: but often when phisicke cannot helpe, the body is cured by ordering and composing the affections of the heart, seeing these can order and dispose the body, and change it as their nature is.

The in the next place followeth the kind of feare: *I fel at his feete as dead, &c.* shewing it was a godly & religious reuerence in the

heart of *Iohn*: for this kind of prostrating the body, is a signe of godly reuerence and religious feare.

Vse.

We must learne by this example, to cast downe our selues in the presence of Christ as *Iohn* did, and to lie prostrate at his feet. *Ob.* But some may say: Christ is not present, we cannot now fall at his feet, seeing he is in heauen. *Answe.* Though Christ be now in heauen, yet he hath his footstoole on earth, and his feet may be said to be here on earth. For the *mercie seate*, that was a signe of Gods presence, though that be taken away, God hath yet his footstoole on earth. *Psal.* 99. 5. For where soeuer the Church of God is assembled to pray vnto him, there is Christ truly present, and there is his footstoole, and there should we cast downe our selues, our soules and bodies to Christ, he being there present. Now though *S. Iohns* feare be a godly feare, yet it is stained with sin: for it is ioyned with immoderate feare of death. Then we see, that the most holy affections of righteous men, they haue their imperfections, they be stained with sinne, because they be sanctified but in part, and in part be corrupt. And there is no man which hath true filiall feare, but he hath withall a seruile feare of hell and damnation.

The meanes follow whereby Christ confirmeth *Iohn*. *Then he laid his right hand.* In this note two things: first, when he vseth this meanes: secondly, the meanes it selfe. The time when, *Then*, that is, after Christ by his presence had smitten him, cast him downe, and laid him as dead: then he vseth meanes of confirmation and comfort. And this is Gods practise, first, to humble a man and cast him downe, breake him and bruise him to powder: then he hauing made him plyable and fit to receiue grace, after confirmeth and comforteth him in the matter of saluation: secondly, a man must be wounded, then haue oyle powred in, and he must be a lost sheepe, after Christ will bring him home againe. And this is the cause why so few profit by the word preached and by the Sacraments, because they be not first humbled and cast downe, and made fit to receiue Christ comfortably offering himselfe in the Gospell. Now follow the meanes themselves, which are two: the first, a signe; *Then he laid his right hand, &c.* secondly, his word, *saying, Feare not, &c.* means

There is not one of them vsed a part, neither the signe, nor the word alone: but he vseth both meanes, more to confirme and comfort *S. Iohn*. So the Lord dealt with *Moses*. *Exod. 3. 12.* he first giueth him the word, I will be with thee to comfort thee: and not onely that, but the signe, he must offer sacrifice to God as a signe. So to *Ahaz*, though a wicked king, he giueth him *Esa. 7. 4.* his word to comfort and confirme him: and *vers. 11* he biddeth him aske a signe of him. So Christ preached the Gospell, there is his word, and confirmeth the same by miracles. Now he giueth vs promises of eternall life; and not onely that, but addeth signes and seales to confirme them: namely, his Sacraments. By this we see that Christ hath exceeding care of his children and of his Church.

Seeing he vseth al meanes to confirme them and to comfort them he giueth them not onely his word, which might be sufficient, but for our weaknesse he addeth signes to confirme vs, *vs. 1.* condescending thus to our capacitie, to take from vs all doubtings, and to giue vs assurance, euen out of the manner of vsing the meanes: as here first he vseth the signe: 2. the word: then he putteth his hand on *Iohn* to assure him of his protection, and after biddeth him not to feare. By this order we see, that the very assurance of Gods presence and protection, is a present remedie against all feare of death and desperation. If a man be assured of Gods presence, aide, and helpe, he needeth not to feare. So *Moses* being affraid to go before the people, the Lord to comfort him (*Exod. 3.*) telleth him he will be with him: and *David* considering God protected him, saith: *Psalme. 23. He would not feare though he were in the shadow of death.* Then it is our dutie to labour to haue the assurance of Gods protection and assistance, which will stay vs against all immoderate feare of death.

Now after this he addeth reasons to confirme his owne words to *Iohn*, when his word might haue serued alone. The first reason is in the end of the 17. verse: *I am the first and the last.* He is the first, because nothing was or can be before him; and the last, because nothing is or can be after Christ. And he addeth these two phrases, to shew his Godhead and eternitie, and that Christ alone hath in his hands the beginning and end

of all things: all things haue their beginnings of him, he of nothing: but he giueth the beginning to all things, and he alone putteth the end to all things. Now seeing he hath power to giue beginning and end, therefore he can preserue his seruants from death, he can keepe them from condemnation. And he hauing power to begin and end all things, can giue and begin his promises, can end and accomplish the same at his pleasure.

Verf. 18.

And am aline (or he that liueth) *but was dead.* In these words is the second reason, which Christ alleageth, to proue his former words, and to make *Iohn* not to feare death too much. The reason consisteth in a distinction, thus: Although I was dead yet now I am he which liueth, I haue power of death, of hell, &c. This distinction hath three parts: first, though *I was dead*, yet now *I liue*: secondly, *I liue for euer*: thirdly, *I haue power of death, and the keyes of hell.* &c.

And I am he which liueth. Here life is ascribed to Christ in a speciall maner: that is, he liueth not as all other creatures liue, but in a more peculiar maner of liuing. Christ vseth this phrase *I am he that liueth*: first, to shew he hath life in himselfe: secondly, that he giueth life to others.

First, he hath sufficient life in, of, and from himselfe; which appeareth thus: life is two-fold, vncreated or created: vncreated, as the life of God which is infinite, eternall, in and of it selfe sufficient. Now Christ as he is God he liueth by this vncreated life, which is all one with his Godhead. Secondly, there is a created life, which is twofold: first, naturall preserued by meate and drinke: secondly, spirituall, which is by immediate fellowship with God, when we liue by the immediate operation of Gods spirit, not by meat and drinke. And Christ he liueth this spirituall life, so that he liueth, first, by an vncreated life as he is God: secondly, he liueth a spirituall life, his bodie and soule being sustained in the second person of the Trinitie: therefore he hath in himselfe most absolute and perfect life. And he giueth life to others two wayes: first, as he is God, and so he giueth life to all men good and bad: he is the author life in all things which liue. *In him we liue, mone, and haue our being*: he giueth life and he preserueth the same. Secondly, he giueth spirituall life to his Church

Act. 17.

Church and children as he is redeemer of mankind: he liueth that we might liue by him. *Ioh. 14. 19.* and as he died not for himselfe alone, so he liueth not for himselfe alone, but for vs, that we by him might haue spirituall life: as appeareth *Colos. 3. Our life is hid with God in Christ.* And for this cause, though Christ be in heauen, yet we eate his bodie and drinke his blood really in a spirituall maner, and they be the spirituall nourishment of our soules. We liue by the spirituall life of Christ; and that for these two causes: first, because he hath sufficient life in himselfe: and secondly, because he giueth life to others: therefore he saith, *I am he which liueth.*

Seeing Christ giueth this spirituall life, we must seeke it at him, and labour that we may say, that *we liue not, but Christ in vs,* and that *our life is hid in Christ:* for Christ he liueth spiritually, that he might bring spirituall life to vs: then we must labour to haue this. We can be content to seeke farre and neare, to take exceeding paines to get gaine, to maintaine this our momentarie & earthly life, which is but as grasse, yea as a fleeting shadow, and as a span: and shall we not be much more carefull to get spirituall life which lasteth for euer? But the practise of men is cleane contrarie, not one of a thousand laboureth for spirituall life, but all are bewitched with the ouer greedie desire of things of this life, &c. The reason of this is, because mens hearts are not touched with the burthen of sinne, and the curse of God on vs for sinne, and therefore it is, that no man seeketh to be deliuered from sinne, to haue this spirituall life with Christ our head. This we may see in that woman *John 4.* Christ telleth her, he is the bread of life; she beginneth to cauill with him, but when he toucheth her speciall sinne, then she hearkeneth to him: so if the Ministers tel the people of matters of saluation, vnlesse they first cast them downe, & make them see their sins, they will but quarrell and cauill at it and the doctrine of the Gospell. Christ is the water, nay the well of life: now we must be thirstie and parched with thirst, and then we will seeke for water: and we must not onely lightly tast, but seeke to be dipped and diued in this fountaine, to haue our soules sowed and soaked in this water: and if we could know that Christ liued in

vs and we in him by spirituall life, it would be a present remedy against all persecutions.

Verf. 18.

And behold I live for ever, Amen. Here followeth the second part of the distinction: namely, *Though I was dead, yet now I live for ever*: which second part of the distinction is propounded with two notes: the first of certaintie, *Amen*, to assure vs that that which Christ avoucheth before of himselfe, is vnfallible true: the second note is of attention, *Behold*. This serueth to stir vp attention in *Iohn* (and in vs) to a serious and due consideration of that part of the distinction, *I live for ever*: therefore Christ saith, *Behold*.

Behold I live. Here note two things: first, in regard of what nature Christ liueth for ever: 1. to what end. He liueth for ever as he is the Mediator of the church: *ergo*, in regard of both natures, as he is God & man. In regard of his Godhead he liueth for ever by the vncreated or essentiall life of God, which is all one with his Godhead, which is for ever, of it selfe, not by any other. Secondly, he liueth for ever in respect of his manhood, for after he ascended into heauen, there he liueth in glorie with the Father and holy Ghost: because in the manhood of Christ dwelleth the power of the Godhead bodily, *Colos. 2*. The second thing is, why he liueth for ever: namely, that he might giue eternall life to his Church, and all his true members. God giueth vs eternall life by his Sonne, 1. *Ioh. 5. 11*. and this is the ground of all ioy: this, that Christ liueth to giue vs eternall life, is the foundation of the Church, and the ground of our happinesse. We must then consider of Christ as a roote: he liueth not for himselfe, (as a roote doth not liue for it selfe) but to giue life to all the branches and true members of the Church. And we must consider of the manhood of Christ, as a common treasure or storehouse of eternall happinesse: therefore *Iohn 6*. Christ saith: *My flesh is meat indeed, and he which eateth his flesh and drinketh his blood, shall live for ever*: shewing, that his flesh and manhood hath power to giue life and quicken his true members: yet not as considered in it selfe, but as the same is ioyned with the Godhead, and is the manhood of God, and the flesh of God: for it hath all this power from God.

The

The meanes whereby he giueth eternall life, is, the mysticall coniunction betweene him & his members. First, God the father giueth Christ to the Church and euery true member of the same, as he hath promised to giue him. Now he giueth him as he is Mediator of the Church, euen whole Christ, yet the Godhead of Christ is not giuen of the Father, but onely by the operation thereof in the manhood, whereby the manhood is made able to satisfie Gods iustice: but the manhood of Christ that, is really giuen, his very substance, his flesh and blood is really giuen to euery beleeuer, and the benefits of the manhood also are truly giuen vs, as righteousness and life eternall, as really as lands or goods are giuen to men. Now to whom Christ is giuen, with him God giueth the Spirit of Christ: for Christ and his Spirit come together: and this Spirit createth in the heart of a man the instrument of faith, by which Christ giuen of God is receiued of vs: and we by faith apprehend his bodie and blood, and the merits thereof. And we receiue not Christ in imagination, or in our braine, but euen as God the Father giueth him, in the word and Sacraments really and truly.

And as the spirit of Christ createth in vs faith, so it knitteth vs also to Christ our head really, though mystically: now from this mysticall coniunction betweene Christ the head and vs the members, proceedeth eternall life, thus. First, he which is ioyned and knie to Christ in this life, and receiue him, he beginneth by this coniunction to liue an eternall life, in dying to all his sins, and to liue to God, to liue as Christ liueth, a spirituall life. And this I may call the first benefit of our spiritual vnion with Christ. Secondly, man thus vnited shall rise to glorie in his bodie. And so the second fruite of this mysticall coniunction with Christ, is the resurrection of the bodie: for this coniunction with Christ after it is begunne, it is perpetuall, it is neuer broken: so that though a man lie in his graue many thousand yeares, yet he is thē vnited to Christ, is in the graue a member of Christ, & by vertue of this mysticall vnion he shall be raised at the last day. As we see the sappe of trees in winter time is in the roote, and the branches seeme to die: but in the spring, when the heate of the Sunne cometh, then it creepeth out into the branches, and

they bud and bring forth fruit: so man hath his winter time in the graue, but in the last day because he is ioyned to Christ the roote, he shall haue his Sommer, and be raised by the power of this mysticall vnion. Thirdly, man so vnited shall lue euer: therefore the third benefite is eternall life and happinesse. By this mysticall vnion we shall haue eternall felicitie and euermourning life in heauen, there we must possesse it, but it cometh from this mysticall vnion with Christ our head. In this life it is begun, and is neuer broken, in regard of the roote and ground thereof, but lasteth for euer, and by it Christ conueyeth eternall life to vs.

Iob 19.

In these words, *Behold, I lue for euer, Amen*, is the ground of two maine articles of our beleefe: namely, of the rising of the bodie: and of life euermourning: for Christ he liueth for euer, to giue life to vs for euer; and this is the ground of our ioyas to Iob, *I know my Redeemer liueth, &c.* Now doth Christ lue to giue vs life in heauen? then we must haue our conuersation in heauen, for where Christ is there should be our conuersation, because he is the foundation and ground of eternall life to vs. Now that our conuersation may be in heauen, we must often and seriously consider of this eternall life purchased to vs by Christ: and for this cause he saith, *Behold I lue*: and withall as we must consider of it, we must haue our affection set on him, our ioy, reioicing and affiance; because Christ liueth that he might keep eternall life for vs. We vse to haue mozt care to preserve that part wherein life is preserved: so seeing Christ is the foundation of our life, and the author of it, we should haue mozt care of him.

Now followeth the third part of the distinction, though *I was dead, yet I haue the keyes of hell and death*. In these words we must not imagine hell to be a bodily place, kept with locke and key as our houses be. Nay, it cannot be proued out of the Scriptures that it is a bodily place, or the punishment of hell in regard of our soule and conscience is bodily, seeing it is the sense & feeling of Gods wrath and vengeance in bodie and soule, therefore it is rather spirituall. But Christ here borroweth a comparison from earthly stewards, who when they haue any thing committed to them, and haue the keyes put into their hands, this sheweth.

sheweth they haue power and authority of al. So Christ hath the keyes of hell and death, that is, power ouer hell and death, and dominion of them both. As if he had said, Though I once was dead in the graue, yet now I haue power and dominion ouer hell and death, and haue vanquished them both.

Seeing Christ alone hath power ouer hell and death, no creature else properly hath authoritie to forgiue sinne, but onely Christ; for he which can forgiue sinne, must haue power ouer hell and death: but he can take away death the punishment of sin, and hell the reward of it: *ergo* he alone can forgiue sin. Then we see the Priesthood of the church of Rome is full of blasphemie, who hold, that man called thereunto, can properly forgiue sinne; not only pronounce sinne to be forgiuen, as the reformed churches hold, and which they denie, but properly to forgiue sinne.

Seeing Christ hath power ouer hell and death, we must reuerence him, do him all honour and obedience we can: if we haue not done this already, yet now to begin; if we haue, then to do it more. Seeing he hath the key of death, he can shut & open, saue and destroy. But if we dishonour and disobey him, then he will not shut but open the doore to death and hell to plague vs. We thinke all is well, Christ he is a Sauour, and all shall be well; he is mercifull, and so make him our packehorse of our sinnes: but we must know, he is not onely a Sauour but a Iudge, he can destroy and saue, open and shut, he hath the key of heauen and hel, and of death.

This is a comfort to the godly, which cleaue to Christ, that he can keep them fro hell & death, so as they cannot hurt them: and this consideration might comfort vs in time of persecution, in the time of sicknesse or any calamitie.

Write these things. In these words he describeth Christ by a second action: for after he had comforted *S. Iohn*, now he giueth him a commandement, which commandement was giuen in the eleuenth verse before, and here repeated to *Iohn* againe. First, because Christ intended by this to shew *Iohn* his especiall care of his Church, that he is now still a provident and carefull head of his Church, and therefore sayth not once, Write these things,

but the second time, that the Church of God might vnderstand in al ages to come, that it is necessary mē should know the estate of the Church: for else he would not haue repeated it againe, if it had not bene very necessary. It is necessary for men to know, that the estate of the church is to be in troubles, that they might the better prepare theselues to beare the. Thirdly, he doth it, that *S. Iohn* might be more assured certainly of his calling to write and pen this booke. Fourthly, that the Church in all ages might be fully assured & without doubt, that this booke is a booke of God, and part of holy Scripture, not inuented by man, but reuealed by God to *Iohn*, for the good of the Church.

Obiect. But though Christ reuealed his wil aright, *Iohn* might mistake it, and erre in penning. *Ans.* *S. Iohn* penned this booke both for matter and maner, as Christ gaue it to him: for this we must know, that there is a difference betweene Apostles and Prophets in the old and new Testament, and Ministers of the Gospell; for they were called immediatly by God and Christ, and had speciall assistance of the spirit of God: which appeareth by those promises they haue made to the by God: as Christ saith, *He which receiueth you, receiueth me, &c. Luke 10. 16.* And, *It is not you which speake, but the spirit of my Father, therefore feare not.* And *Iohn 14. The holy Ghost shall leade you into all truth:* which though some apply it to all Ministers, yet if we mark the place, it can agree to none but the Apostles. And they meeting at Ierusalem, concluded as it seemed good to the holy Ghost & to them: so that we see they could not erre, though they were but men. But it is not so with the Ministers of the word, they may and do erre often. Now *S. Iohn* being a faithfull Apostle, he receiued this of Christ without error, and so penned it.

In this commaundement of Christ is a plaine diuision of this whole booke, *Write the things thou hast seene:* that is, this vision I haue offered to thee, & the things thou sawest. In the second place he sets downe the present estate of the church. Thirdly the things to come, that is, the future estate of the church to the end of the world. So that this booke containeth two things in it, first, the estate of the church in time present, secondly, in time to come to the end of the world: the words of Christ make this diuision plainly.

If

If it be lawfull to vse diuisions, then it is lawfull to set downe rules for direction of diuiding aright: but the first is lawfull, *ergo* the second. Therefore the art of reasoning and diuiding, as also Rhetoricke is not vnlawfull, as some would haue it.

The mystery of the seven starres. Here is the third action of Christ, which is the interpretation of the vision which he had shewed to *Iohn*, and he onely interprets the principall parts of it. Now Christ expounds this visio to *Iohn*, namely, because he was to shew himselfe to be an holy man of God, namely a Prophet. Now the principall thing in a Prophet, is to be able to expound visions, either his owne or any others, as we see in *Daniel*. Now that he might shew himselfe to be an absolute Prophet, in this booke Christ doth not onely shew him the vision, but the interpretation of it: he expounds it, that *Iohn* might be encouraged in penning and receiuing the things in this booke.

Now Christ expounds not the whole vision, but the two principall parts: what is meant by the seven starres and seven candlestickes: namely, by the seven starres seven Angels of the seven churches: by the candlestickes, we shewed before.

In this verse note why Christ expounds the two principall parts, & leaues the rest vnexpounded. The reason is, first because Christ hath giuen his church power to expound visions and scripture. Now if he had expounded euery part and circumstance, then there had bene no matter left to the church to exercise her power. Secondly, to stir vp to diligence & study of the scripture, both Ministers & all members of the church: for if all were plaine, then men wold be idle, neuer take paines to interpret the word: therefore Christ expounds the chiefe, and leaues the circumstances and appurtenances for the church to interpret. Thirdly, that men might dayly grow in knowledge of the Scripture: for if all were knowne at first, they would not study to increase in knowledge: fourthly, to stir vp inuocatio for grace, to vnderstand Scripture. Now these Ministers are called Angels, which be the Pastors and Ministers of the church. *Mat. 11. 10.* *Iohn* Baptist is called Christs Angel, or messenger, or Ambassadour. By this we haue direction to expound another place of Scripture, where it is said, *Women must be covered because of the Angels: that is, be-*

cause of the Ministers: for the couering of the head in the church of Corinth was a signe of subiection and inferioritie, contrary to our vse. Now, the women when they come into the congregation before the Ministers, they must be couered, to shew their subiection and submission to the Gospell and doctrine deliuered to them.

vse.

Seeing Ministers be called Angels, that is, messengers and Ambassadors, they must behaue themselues as Ambassadors, they must haue speciall care, first of the matter of the ambassage, secondly of the maner, that they deliuer nothing but their Lords mind, and in that very maner he would if he were present: and if they deliuer any thing els, or in any other maner, they shal be suspected of vnfaithfulness. Now if Christ were on earth, would he deliuer his word partly in English, partly in Latin, or vse the authoritie of the fathers, & Philosophy, or of Poets? And surely though me cal this the learned way of preaching, yet it is not that Christ commaunded. Nay if this were admitted, it would bring in Barbarisme, and expell the Gospell out of this land, and bring in that misery which was among the Schoole-men, when all things were brought to needlesse disputations.

The third thing is the phrase Christ vseth, *The seuen starres are the seuen Angels, &c.* Not that they signifie the seuen Angels, or the candlestickes signifie the seuen Churches, but are so. Hence we see, that the exposition in the sacrament, *This is my body and blood*, is warranted, and not to be vnderstood literally, as the Papists hold. For as it is absurd to hold, that these were seuen Angels indeed, because they are called so; so to hold the bread is really transformed indeed into Christs body: but being a signe (as it is common in Scripture) is put for the thing signified, this bread is, that is, represents my body, &c.

CHAP. II.

VERSE I.

Unto the Angell of the Church of Ephesus, &c.



N this second and third Chapters is set downe the fourth action of Christ, whereby *Iohn* describeth him: which is, that Christ in these two Chapters giueth him 7. particular commandements, to write seuen Epistles to the seuen Churches of Asia. The first of these seuen particular commandements is in this first verse, *Unto the Angell of the Church, &c.* and after the commandement followeth the Epistle it selfe: *Thesethings, &c.* to the eighth verse.

Unto the Angell. This word is two waies vsed; first, it signifieth the Minister or Pastor of the particular Church of Ephesus. and so it is taken commonly and of the most. Secondly, it may signifie a companie of Ministers or gouernours of the particular Church of Ephesus: as *Paule* biddeth the take heed to the flocke, of which they were *ἐπισκοποι* ouerseers: shewing, there were many Ministers of the particular Church of Ephesus. And so this word *Angell*, may signifie the whole cōpanie of Ministers of that Church: as we see in Scripture the naming of one man signifieth a whole multitude. God biddeth *Moses* send my sonne, &c. by which particular he noteth the whole bodie of the Israelites. So thogh Antichrist be not one particular man, but the whole successiō of Popes, yet *Paul* calleth him that Antichrist, and that child of perdition & so it skilleth not whether we take it for one man, or the whole multitude of gouernors.

Act. 20. 28.

1. Thess. 2.

In this particular commandement are two points: first, the intent of Christ was to write to the whole bodie of the Church of Ephesus, yet he directeth his letter not to them all, but to the Angell and Minister. That he intended to write to the whole Church, it appeareth in the former Chapter, where he is commanded to write to the Churches, and in the

end of this, where he saith, *He which hath eares let him heare, what the Spirit writeth to the Churches.*

Now in that he directeth his Epistle to the Angell and Minister, he intimateth to him his dutie: first, that he must especially labour to teach the particular contents of this Epistle to the Church of Ephesus: secondly, that he should not onely teach, but be a patterne and example to them of the things contained in this Epistle. Secondly, he writeth to the Angell of the church himselfe, because he especially doth great good or harme to the Church. If the minister be good, there cometh much good, if he be euill there cometh much euill, as all examples shew. Now Christ writeth for this cause to him, that he might be diligent, and so the cause of good, not of euill.

The second point is, that Christ among all the seuen Churches writeth to the Church of Ephesus: first, which is not, because it had authoritie about the rest, but because it was in riches and estimation about the rest, and was the mother citie: for they were all candlestickes, and all golden candlestickes: but because it excelled, all other cities in riches and estimation; for that he directeth his Epistle first to this Church. By which he sheweth, that those Churches, townes, and people which excell either in riches and estimation, and other temporall gifts, they must also excell in the graces of God. And so all men in particular, as they excell in riches and estimation, they must excel others in godlinesse and religion. So then, each town must (as it excelleth other, in that it hath a greater name, greater riches, or other temporall blessings) go before other which want them. If they excell other in these, and be inferiour in godlinesse and religion, it is a shame for them before God and man too.

The Epistle hath three parts, (as all ordinarie Epistles haue) first, a preface: secondly, a proposition: thirdly, a conclusion. The preface in the first verse.

Now the preface or entrance is taken out of the former chapter. The end and intent of it is, to draw the Church of Ephesus to reuerence the admonition of Christ: so that Christ poundeth not that first, but makes an entrance to prepare them to receiue the same with reuerence, and regard his admonition

nition. The third reason which he useth to do this, is thus framed: If I be he which holdeth the seven stars in my right hand, that is, he which by my mightie power, guide, blesse, protect, and defend thee and thy Ministers: and if I walke in the midst of the seven candlestickes, that is, am alwaies present in the midst of thy Church, to guide, blesse and protect you, then ye should receiue and reuerence mine admonition: but the first is true, ergo, my admonition must be reuerenced and obeyed, both of the Ministers and of the people.

In this preface two things are to be learned: first, seeing Christ repeateth that againe which he taught in the former Chapter: he sheweth, this is a most notable point to be learned and practised of all men: which is, that Christ he is present in his Church, & being present, by his speciall providence doth blesse, guide, and protect it, both in Ministers and people. This must we labour to learne, and to be certainly perswaded of, euen of the speciall presence and providence of Christ in his Church, in the speciall workes of the same. And without this, we cannot haue sound religion: & this standeth not in a swimming knowledge in the braine, but in a sure perswasion of the same in the heart. The second thing is, that this perswasion of the speciall presence and providence of Christ in his Church, is the meanes to draw vs to all duties of our calling, seeing Christ maketh this his reason to moue them to obey his admonition. So if we think and perswade our selues, that Christ is present in the midst of his Church, and withall guideth, blesseth, and protecteth the same, we cannot but be moued to walke as *Enoch* and *Abraham* did, with God euen as in his presence.

In this second verse is the second part of the Epistle, which is the proposition, which containeth the very matter and substance of the Epistle. This proposition hath two parts: first, a commendation of this Church, especially of the Ministers, in the second and third verses: secondly, a rebuke or reprehension, in the fourth verse. First, the commendation is in generall, *I know thy workes*. Secondly, in particular, for particular duties, in the words following.

I know thy workes. Some expound it of workes of mercie, and

liberalitie, but that cannot stand. But when he saith, I know thy workes, that is, the dealings and practises of the people and Ministers in their callings and affaires, I know them, they are open and not hid from me: and not onely know them, but with approbation allow them: as in comparing this with the fourth verse, where there is an opposition: Though I know thy workes, that is, allow them, yet I find fault in some things with thee.

Pse.

Whereas Christ he knoweth, that is, approueth their workes, wayes, dealing, conuersation and liuing, this may be a remedie against all secret and hidden sinnes. The adulterer, theefe, and murderer wait for the night, when they thinke none see them, then they may as they thinke practise any sinne: so the tradesman he thinking no man seeth him, changeth and counterfeitteth his wares, and blearing mans eye, thinketh all is well. And the cause why there is such fraud, deceit, guile, and iniustice among men is, because men thinke they can do it so, as none shall see them: they say, God regardeth and seeth not our dealing. *Psal. 94. 7.* But if men would consider, that though they can blear the eye of man, yet they cannot hide it from God, seeing they be alwaies in his sight, this would make men make conscience of many secret corruptions and sins in their hearts. Whereas this knowledge is ioyned with approbation, and so Christ approueth of their workes, some may aske, How can God approue of that which doth not satisfie his law, as the best workes of the most holy men of God, being stained with sin, do not? *Answer.* The Gospell reuealeth to vs more then the lawe, being the second part of the word. Now the Gospell telleth vs, that if a man will, and vnfainedly do his indeuour, to please God, to obey his will, if a man do this in truth, the Lord accepteth the will for the deed. So Christ here he approueth of their workes proceeding from a pure will and earnest indeuour, as perfect, taking the will for the deed.

Objection.

Answer.

Objection.

Answer.

But seeing Christ approueth their workes, the Papists may argue hence thus: If God approue thus of men, then they haue no sinne: if they haue none, then a man may fulfill the law in this life, and so be iustified by workes. *Ans.* Christ approueth not their or our workes simply, but in part, as they be his workes, proceeding

proceeding from his spirit in our hearts: but as they proceed from our corrupt will, and be fruites of our flesh, he doth not. Againe, Christ approues them with pardon as they be pardoned, and if they were not so approued, he could not approue them at all. Christ sayth, *I know your workes*, that is, as proceeding from my spirit, and as pardoned, hauing the guilt taken from them.

Now I come to her commendation particularly, which is especially of the Angel or minister, in whom the first thing commended is this, namely *labour*: which is an excellent vertue, especially in the Ministers painfullnesse, diligence and labour, in guiding and gouerning the church ouer which they are set: and this vertue is worthy of commendation, as *1. Tim. 5. 17.* he which ruleth well, is worthy of double honour. And *Paul* matched and preferred himselfe before all other Apostles, in this, that he laboured more then they all.

Seeing our Sauour Christ commends this labour of the ministry, we see it is a worke of paines and diligence, if it be well done, and not of ease and idleness, as men commonly esteeme of it: else Christ would neuer commend it about all other works in the ministry.

Seeing Christ commends the Ministers, in being painfull and diligent in teaching and gouerning the people must be diligent in learning and obeying them. But men thinke, all is wel if they come and heare the word, though they take no paines to know and vnderstand it, they will not take paines to increase in the knowledge of Religion. And the want of this paines and diligence in the people, is the cause why the word is heard without profit. Men bestow all paines, care and diligence in worldly things, and yet take no paines in the principall, namely, that which belongs to their soules health: but if they would be commended of Christ, then they must vse diligence, take paines in hearing, learning, and obeying the word of God.

The Minister must labour to teach and to gouerne the people, *ergo* they must labor to obey and keepe a good conscience, and to practise religion. And as *Paul* laboured to keepe a good conscience: so must all men learne to know and vnderstand the word, and then to obey and practise the same. Secondly, Christ

he commends their patience in bearing the crosse, which vsually followes the Gospell: and this is worthy commendation, seeing it is more then many of the Prophets performed. *Ierem. 20.* was exceeding impatient. *Jonah* being schooled in the whales belly, yet after that, all things falling not out to his mind, he was most impatient. But this Angel laboured, and withall ioyed in the crosse and persecution. As he did, so must Ministers labour to publish the Gospell: and because the crosse accompanies the Gospell, they must be armed against persecution, with patience they must endure all crosses, as *Luke 8. 15.* the good ground brings forth fruite with patience. The practise of Religion and patience must go together.

Now Christ ioyneth these two, labouring in his calling, and patience, together, & seuereth them not: first, because before the fall, man could do all his dutie without trouble, with ease and ioy: but since the fall, we being corrupted can do nothing but it is a trouble to vs; and God set this marke on our finnes, that all our duties should be troublesome, and our callings should haue crosses and calamities ioyned with them. Secondly, because as the Ministers labor to increase in the people knowledge, and to do their duties: so the diuell labours to hinder them and to stay them, therefore they must not onely labour, but be diligent to strue with patience. So *Paul 1. Thess. 2.* he wold haue come to the, but Satan hindred him. Now as Christ ioyneth these two in the ministry, so in all callings these must go together, both in particular callings of the church and of the common wealth. First, we must know the duties of our callings: secondly, we must labour in patience to practise them with diligence: and withal we must know, that in the doing of our dutie there is also ioyned affliction, therefore we must be armed with patience, to vndergo all crosses and afflictions in our callings: we must (though afflictions come) obey the commaundement of God, inioyning vs trauell and labour in our callings, and rely on his promise, that he will blesse vs in our callings, if we labour diligently and be patient in afflictions. We must not thinke we may leaue our particular callings because of troubles and afflictions, but we must faithfully continue in them, and with patience endure afflictions, and then

Christ

Christ shall commend vs, which is better then all the things in the world: his commendation is better then any man can giue. If he commend vs, then we are happie, though all men speake ill of vs. But if we neglect and contemne our callings, and will not go on because of afflictions, but leaue them for want of patience, then in stead of commending, he will discommend and disgrace vs: and then what will it help vs though all men speake well of vs?

And thou canst not beare, &c. Now followeth the third particular worke or vertue, for which Christ commends the church of Ephesus. *And how thou canst not beare them which be wicked.* Here he commends her seueritie against wicked men, that is, such as liued offensively in life or doctrine, maintained any manifest heresie or errour. The church of Ephesus could not beare such, but esteemed of them as a burthen which she could not beare, but sought to be disburthened of.

Hence we see, that it is necessary for wicked men to be seuered from the church, and she must be purged of them. So in all ages it was practised, the Church sought to be disburdened of wicked men, as when Cain had slaine his brother, *Genes. 4.* the Lord cast him out fro his face, that is, that place where Adam & his family assembled to worship God; So saith *Jeremy*, the wicked must be taken away. *Ier. 15.* *If thou wilt turne and separate the wicked, & the vile, then thou shalt be as the Lords mouth.* *1. Cor. 5.* where the incestuous person must be giuen vnto Satan. All these places proue, that wicked men which be offensive in life or doctrine, must be separate from the church, she must be purged of them. It is necessary the church should be purged of these wicked men: first, because they defile the worship of God, and infect it by their wickednesse, whereas they which worship him must be holy as he is holy. Secondly, least the church be defiled & infected by their wicked doctrine and life, for they be as sowre leauen which wil soone infect the whole masse of dough.

By this we see a manifest and common fault in our churches, wherein wicked men are not only suffered to liue, but to receiue the sacraments, and heare the word preached, as though they were good; yea though many of the want knowledge, be contem-

ners of the word & sacraments; many be tainted with drunken-
nesse and vices, which accompany that time. But such as want
knowledge or be wicked men in life or doctrine, ought not to
be suffered to preach to the people; and receiue the sacraments:
therefore we must seek al good meanes to disburthen the church
of them. Secondly, seeing they sought to be disburthened of
them, we see Christ hath giuen his church iudicial power to dis-
burthen her self of wicked mē, to excommunicate and cast them
out of the church, froin receiuing the sacraments: she could not
beare them, but sought to be disburthened, which she would not
vnlesse Christ had giuen her power to do it.

Obiect. But some hold, that wicked men must not be cast out
of the church, but must be suffered to liue in the church, and
prone it by *Marke* 13. 30. the tares must be alone till the end.

Answer. But here in the parable of the tares, Christ speaketh
not of the church to be purged by Magistrates, but of the vni-
uersall purging in the last day, and that not by men, but by the
Angels.

Obiect. *Luke* 14. 13. Christ bids them compell all in the
high wayes: now if all must be compelled, then none must be ex-
empted and cast out of the church. *Answer.* Christ speaketh not of
compelling them to the sacraments, but onely to the preaching
of the word: they must come and heare that; yet this proues not
that men wicked and offensiue may not be suspended, barred,
and excommunicated in regard of the sacraments and scales of
saluation, which must be giuen to them onely which haue faith
and repentance.

Quest. Seeing wicked men must be seuered from the church,
hence a question ariseth: how farre forth a man may conuerse
with them, and keepe company with them which are offensiue
in life and doctrine?

Answer. Euill men must be considered, first, as they be mem-
bers of a commonwealth, towne, or citie: secondly, as they be
members of a particular church by tolleration. Now as they be
members of a commonwealth, citie or towne, we may conuerse
with them in outward things and ciuill affaires, as buying, sel-
ling, &c. we may make outward ciuill peace with them,
through

though they be wicked, as *Paul* biddeth vs haue peace with all men, as farre as it may stand with the honor of God and good of the Church; and societie wherein we liue. In this ciuill societie we may performe outward ciuill dutie of loue and ciuill courtesie. *Tit.* 3. 2.

2 As a wicked man is a member of a particular Church, we may liue in it with him, for we may not because of him leaue that Church, but still liue and abide in it. So *Christ* though the *Iewes* and their *Doctors* were wicked men, in life and doctrine hypocrites, yet he liued still among them: but so as we seeing their wicked life, allow not of it, but be grieved with it, as the *Sodomites* grieved the righteous heart of *Lot*. Nay, although they be admitted to the supper of the Lord by the fault of the Minister, yet we must and may continue among them in the Church. So did *Christ*, he liued among the *Iewes*, communicated among them in eating of the *Passcouer*, and receiued the Sacraments among them, though they were corrupt in life and doctrine. And the reason is, because if thy conscience be good, it cannot be defiled by another mans ill conscience. Yet though we may do these things with them, yet two things are vnlawfull: first, we must haue no priuate or familiar companie with them, (*1. Cor.* 5. the tenth and eleuenth verses.) Secondly, no speciall familiaritie. We must not barre them of generall duties, but of speciall familiaritie onely: For by that meanes a man doth not onely countenance their persons, but alloweth of their sinnes.

This then condemneth them which are of that nature, that they can fit and frame themselves to all companies, to the humours and disposition of any companie: but if there be any openly wicked in life or doctrine, we must not keepe any priuate companie with him, shew him no speciall familiaritie, but withdraw our selues from such, as burdens to vs. vse.

And hath examined them. This sharpe dealing of the Church of *Ephesus* hath 2 parts: the first, is examination: the second, condemnation of the false Apostles. The first part is the discoverie of these false Apostles. The second, the opposing of her selfe against them being discovered. The discoverie of the false Apo-

fles teacheth two points: first, that God hath giuen to his Church, and to the Ministers and members of it, speciall grace and wisdom, an excellent gift of discerning. 1. *Cor.* 2. 15. 1. *Cor.* 11. Spirituall men, endued with the Spirit of God, can discern of the Lords bodie and bloud, betweene bread and wine in the Sacrament, and common bread and wine. 2. *Cor.* 13. Proue your selues: shewing, that the Church and the members thereof, haue power, and the gift of wisdom to try whether they haue faith or not, 1. *Ioh.* 5. Trye the spirits. And here she hath power to discern of false Apostles: and by this gift the Church of God differeth from all other societies of men: no societie saue the Church of God hath this gift to iudge betweene good and bad, truth and error, true Apostles and false Apostles. Secondly, we gather hence, that the Church of God can iudge whether a Church be a true Church or not. Some men it pleaseth to call this to question, nay, to deny that there is any Church in England, but call it the synagogue of Satan, and say there is no ministerie in it, no word, no Sacraments. Now seeing the Church of God can iudge of vs in England: and the churches in Germanie, in Scotland, & other Euangelicall and reformed Churches, iudge the Church of England a true Church: it is so, though they deny it. For we must rather stand to the iudgement of one or many particular true churches, then of any one priuate, or of many men. Yea seeing the church of God can iudge of false Apostles, it hath also power to iudge of Scriptures, to iudge which books be canonicall, which are not. And that which the church of Rome saith is false: that the Church indeed can iudge, but as it hath authoritie from their Church. This Church of Ephesus had this power long before Rome was in such name, nay, it was in this time of *Iohn* of farre greater name then Rome, and more famous and excellent.

The second point: in what things this discouerie of false Apostles consisteth: in what this iudiciall action standeth, which God hath giuen to the Church. It standeth in two things: first, examination of false doctrine and false teachers. Secondly, condemnation of the same after examination. For the first, he saith, *And*
haue

best examined: for the second, and found them liers. To come to this examination, the Church of Ephesus had a gift of examination, and did examine false Apostles and their doctrine. But how may a particular Church examine a false Apostle and his doctrine? To do this, the man or Church which would do it, must first prepare themselves, and make them fit to examine: and in this preparation must have an humble heart and lowly spirit: for God reuealeth not his will to proud men, such as haue high minds in their conceit. And in this humbling of himselfe, he must cleane renounce his owne wit and reason, and in regard of himselfe become a foole in his owne reason, if he will be wise in the word of God. After this preparation he must make prayers to God in his spirit, that the Lord would reueale the thing to him, and that he would open his eyes by the meanes vsed, to iudge of truth & falshood. *Luk. 11. Iam. 1. 5.* In the next place he must labour thoroughly to know and well to conceiue of their false doctrines: he must seek to vnderstand them, their grounds, the differences betweene them and the truth. For it is a fowle fault to propound a mans error, and not in that meaning he propounded it or gaue it. They must further proue and trie whether the doctrine be of God or men. To do this, he must come to the word of God, which must be iudge in the matter, not a dumme letter, as the Papists hold, but the true iudge in all matters, and most sufficient. *Esa. 8. 19. 20. Iob. 5. Search the Scriptures.* Only the Lord must be iudge in his owne matters, he must giue sentence, and no Angell, Saint, or man. Now this he doth in the written word: therefore they must search whether such doctrines be contained in the Scriptures, or can by necessarie consequence be collected out of them. They must after all this looke to their liues: for it is not possible that a false Apostle should lead a good life. We must looke on his faith and repentance, and the fruites of them: for though he may bleare the eyes of the world, yet if his life be well sifted, it will appeare by his faith and repentance he is but an hypocrite; and therefore *Mat. 7.* Christ biddeth vs trie them by their fruites. A bad tree cannot bring good fruit: but if a man trie and tast them, though they appeare beautifull to the eye, yet we shall find them to be but hypocriticall.

Question.

Answer.

and this is a iudgement of God vpon such, that they shal be defc-
cryed by this one marke, by their liues and conuersations.

If they teach false doctrine they haue liues answerable, they
cannot but liue accordingly. There was neuer any which was a
famous hereticke in the Church, but his life was stained with
monstrous sinnes, as the historie of the Church declareth.

The second part of the discouerie is, condemnation or sen-
tence against them: for after she had examined them, & finding
them not that they seemed to be, she pronounced them to be
false Apostles and lyers, Note; she calleth them lyers, vseth sharp
speeches and yet sinneth not seeing Christ commendeth her:
so Ministers to shew their hatred against vice, may vse sharpe
speeches; not to raile or taunt, but only to shew our hatred and
misliking of sinne. So *John Baptist* calleth them a generation
of vipers: Christ called *Herod* a Foxe, *Paul* the Galatians
fooles.

Doctrine.

In that she calleth them lyers, it sheweth three things: first,
that they spake falsely, and deliuered that which was vntrue: se-
condly, that they sinned of knowledge: thirdly, that they did it
of malice, to hurt and deceiue the Church: for these three be
the properties of a liar.

Againe, here we see that which *Paul* (*Act. 20.*) foretold by
the spirit of Prophecie to be fulfilled, that among the Ephesians
should arise lyars on them, which professed the Gospell with
them.

Againe, if men in the daies of the Apostles (they being yet
aliue) durst so take on the Apostolical authoritie, to cal theselues
Apostles and were none: no maruell if the Pope of Rome durst
sixe hundred yeares after them take this vpon him, and say, he
is *Peters* successor, to take on him Apostolicall power, to allow
of those bookes for canonical which are not, and to make them
as pure Scripture which are onely Apocrypha.

And thou hast suffered: In the former words were the first
part, namely, of her seueritie, for which Christ commended the
church of Ephesus: now followeth the second part, which is, af-
ter their discouery to oppose her self against false apostles: how,
it will appeare in the particulars. First, of the words, *Thou hast*
suffered.

suffered, or as well, *thou hast borne as a burthen*: for the word signifieth to be pressed down vnder a great burden. These burdens were troubles which these false apostles caused after they were discovered: first, open iniuries and persecutions: secondly, the spreading of damnable and hereticall doctrines. The Ecclesiasticall histories report, that these false apostles were such, as *Cerintus, Ebeon, Marcion*, and such like.

Now in these words we note, it is the will of God, that euen *vs.* the best church shall be troubled by false Apostles, teaching hereticall doctrine, and persecuting the church of God, and so become great burdens to the church, and that the Lord suffers for weightie causes: first, these false apostles must be, that the beleeuers and true imbracers of the Gospel might be stirred vp more to embrace and loue the same: as *Iude* exhorts the true beleeuers, *To fight for their common faith*; and the more religion is oppressed, the more we should labour to maintaine it. Secondly, that professors might be proued and tried, whether they be true and sound or not, *1. Cor. 11. 19. There must be heresies, &c.* Thirdly, that God may exercise his indgements on the wicked and hypocrites, for they be giuen vp to beleue lies, & to receiue their false doctrine, *2. Thess. 2. 11.*

Seeing the Lord suffereth his best churches to be troubled with false Apostles, and that for most weightie causes: we must not be offended, because we see dissensions and scismes in the church; which proceed not by reason of the Gospel, but from wicked, erroneous and hereticall men: for the Lord will haue such to liue in his church, to make his owne seruants to loue him more, to trie who be sound professors, and to bring iudgement on the wicked: these should not make vs discouraged, but more to loue and embrace the Gospel. *vs.*

Now after the dealing of these false apostles, is set downe the dealing of the church of Ephesus against them, in all things opposing her selfe against them.

Thou hast suffered, and hast patience. That is, thou hast borne a burden by manifold troubles and persecutions, and hast patience to beare them. *Obiect.* But how can troubles, persecutions, and patience stand together? for troubles are against mens na-

ture, and makes them frer, and be impatient against God & man.

Ans. These stand together, not by nature, but by grace. *Rom. 5. 4. Tribulation brings patience.* And they stand thus together: to him which truly beleueeth in Christ, God giueth the spirit of meeknes, sheds his loue in his heart, & so in the midst of trouble giues him a speciall tast of his mercie. And thus in the time of trouble, they which be most troubled, are withal most patient: so trouble and patience may be together.

And hast patience. Here is the first way, by which the church of Ephesus opposed her self against false apostles and their dealings, which were double: first, iniuries and persecutions: secondly, false doctrines, heretical and damnable teaching. Now by patience she opposed her selfe to both these. So the onely way to oppose our selues against persecutors, such as iniury or wrong vs, is patience: whereby we stop their mouthes, and if it be possible, ouercome and winne them to Christ. This should be our meanes to oppose our selues against wicked men, as well in life and maners, as in iudgement and doctrine; not to returne iniury for iniurie, and wrong for wrong, but to haue patience; not that we should beare their sinnes, but their wrongs.

And for my names sake hast laboured. Here is the second meanes how she opposed her selfe against their spreading of damnable and hereticall doctrine, which is the second way how they were a burden to her. *Hast laboured:* that is, taken much paines for my name, that is, my glory, and the Gospell of Christ: for maintaining my glory and true Religion, thou hast taken as great paines, as they did to broach heresies: and so thou hast opposed thy selfe against them.

Vs.

Here then is our second way to oppose our selues against damnable heresies of wicked men: we must labour to haue the true word of God, to maintaine the glory of God and true Religion. Is this so? Then euery man shall labour for the name and Religion of Christ, both minister and people; for this labour is double, partly of the minister, partly of the people. Concerning ministers: the ministers first labour must be, by studying and reading the word, to furnish himselfe with sufficient knowledge in the foundation and substance of the Gospel of Christ. And for this

this cause *S. Iohn* (Reuelation 11.) must eate the booke, that is, by study & meditation, haue it in his hart and mind, to digest it wel. *Psal. 2. 7.* the Priests lips must preserue knowledge, and the people must seeke it at his mouth. Secondly, he must deliuer the whole counsell of God, concerning the matter of saluation to the people, and the whole doctrine of the Gospell contained in the bookes of the Prophets and Apostles. So did *Paul*, *Act. 20.* *He kept nothing backe, but deliuered the whole counsell of God.* Thirdly, he must be able to discouer, and labour to discern false teachers to the people, not onely to know them, but make the church to know them, *Tit. 1.* he must conuince false teachers, and then discern and discouer them, which he shall do by two things: first, by conuincing and discrying their erroneous doctrine: secondly, by reprouing their wicked life. So Christ noteth the erroneous doctrine of the Scribes and Pharises, in their misinterpreting the law: secondly, their hypocritical life. So *Paul* in all his Epistles noteth wicked mens errors, and then their bad life. Fourthly, he must labour that the doctrine deliuered out of the Gospell, may edifie and take fruite in mens hearts, which is the end of all preaching and teaching. *1. Cor. 14.* Fifthly, he must labour to be a patterne and president in his owne person, of that doctrine which he teacheth, that so they may haue his example to follow, which is an excellent meanes to make them obey the word: and the neglect of it is the cause why many contemne the word. Sixthly, he must make petition to God, that his particular church may hold, receiue, & obey that doctrine he deliuereth. So *Paul* in all his Epistles praies for them, that they may receiue his doctrine.

Now as the minister, so the people also must labour for the name of Christ, euery true member of the church must labour to know & vnderstand that doctrine which is deliuered out of the word. Christ bids vs beleue the Gospel and repent: therefore we must first know it, and then we must beleue it. Then we must do as *Mary* did, we must leaue other lesse matters, and sit at Christs feete, to heare his gracious words. *Luke 11.* further we must labor to haue the same knowledge conueyed to others: for if we beleue truly, we cannot containe our selues, but we.

must needs teach others. He which drinketh of the well of life, out of his belly shall flow full streames of running water. *Iob. 7.* he cannot hold it in, but will conuey it to others. That this may be done, first the head of the family, he must teach and instruct his family: for God hath bound him in conscience to spread abroad that knowledge he hath, to conuey it to his family: and though he be not able, yet God requireth he should be able to instruct them, that so a particular and litle church may be in his family. Againe, euery man must labour to win his enemy, and those which are ignorant, to beleue the word. The Scribes and Pharisees compasse sea and land to make one Proselite, and the wicked labour to winne men to do as they do, much more should we. Yea and euery man must labour to edifie those which be fellow-members with him of the same church, in faith, hope, loue, repentance, and such like: & as *Iude* saith, they must labour to saue some. Lastly, to maintaine the Religion of Christ against all his enemies, to answer them and to stop their mouthes. *1. Pet. 3. 15.*

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Seeing the maintaining of the name and religion of Christ is so excellent a thing, we must about all things labour for it: to spread it abroad ouer the whole earth, to defend it against all false teachers. So did the church of Ephesus being persecuted and iniured by false Apostles: and this is a most blessed labor, to defend Christ and his Religion, and with it the honour of God.

In the end of the verse he setteth downe the maner how she defended it: namely, that she did not faint, but was constant, persecuted to the end. So we haue had the Gospell long time preached, we haue defended it with hazard of life & goods; we must not now leaue off, but still continue: and this exhortation is necessary, seeing the Lord, after so long peace, purposeth to try vs by persecution, or false teachers. Then let vs purpose to be constant to the end, and not as some, who can change as religion changeth, be of any religion. To maintaine religion is commended, but the principall thing for which the church of Ephesus is commended, is perseverance.

Neuertheless, &c. In the fourth verse Christ setteth downe a

direct and seuerer reproofe of this Church. *I haue something against thee.* Here Christ dealeth as a iudge, calling the Church to an accompt, laying actions to her charge: which actiō is this, *Thou hast lost thy first loue:* that is, the Church and people of Ephesus, the Angel and the people, haue lost that loue to God, religion and man, which they had when they were first called: not that they left it wholly, but because both people and Minister suffered their first loue to decay, that now it was not so feruent and plentiful as before. *Ob.* Christ commendeth her zeale against false Apostles. *Ans.* It is true, she had now zeale and loue, but in respect of that she had first it was no zeale, nay it was cold and frozen, therefore he saith: *thou hast lost thy first loue.*

*Objection,
Answer.*

If God had something against this Church: then now he may iustly haue against all particular Churches in the world, especially against vs in this land, seeing we be in her estate. A great part neuer had loue of Christ, and many haue fallen from their first loue. That some haue fallen it is plaine: many in *Queene Mariæ* time were content to liue in persecution for the Gospell: but after when quietnes came, they became plaine worldlings, as the historie of the Church records. And in these dayes of peace and plentie of the Gospell, such as twentie or seuen and twentie yeares agoe were zealous professors, now become cold and frozen professors. Many I graunt are free from this sinne, yet are they worse then these: for they neuer had the loue of Christ and religion, but are louers of themselves, of this world, honour, riches and pleasure. Now then if Christ had something against these Churches for losing their loue, much more may he haue against vs, who neuer had true loue of him. That men now adayes be louers of themselves, of this world, and not of Christ, it appeareth, seeing most congregations and Churches after this long time of hearing the Gospell preached, being daily taught, yet are not bettered in opinion, iudgement, life and obedience: but still remaine ignorant, which argueth no loue of God, nor of religion. For it is not possible that he which loueth God, and loueth religion indeed, should continue from yeare to yeare in ignorance, neuer profit in practise of religion, in bettering his knowledge & obedience,

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*Mat. 24.
2. Tim. 3.*

And in that men liue in their particular callings without al loue to God and religion, it argueth they loue not God: for if they loued God, they must needes loue their neighbours: these going together. But men praetise their callings with the loue of themselves, of honour, riches, and pleasure; no loue to God, no loue to religion. This should moue vs to stirre vp our hearts to labor to get true loue of God, of religion, and of our neighbour, that Christ haue no action against vs. For if a King or a mightie man should haue an action against vs, especially being iust and good, it would make one quake and tremble: but we haue euen the King of heauen and earth to deale with, he hath an action against vs, then it is best to looke about vs. This *Paule* vrged to *Timothy*, that he would go beyond himselfe, & abound in feare, loue and repentance. *Phil.* 3. 13. he laboured to that which was before, forgetting that which was behind, that so he might come to perfection. He looked first on his wants, and then by the tooke occasion to grow and increase in all spirituall graces. We are in a way, we must walke to heauen, there is no standing, if we purpose to come to the marke: we must be as young children, who first are children, hile in knowledge and strength, after are stronger, and lastly become tall men: so must we daily grow till we become tall men in Christ, perfect and tall men in knowledge of religion. And they which after long preaching be ignorant or make no increase in religion, they be in a dangerous estate, and cannot possibly come to the kingdome of heauen.

Haſt fallen from thy first loue. Hence the Papists as also other Churches gather, that a man may fall away wholly and finally: then this question must be considered whether a man may wholly fall from grace. That we may answer to this, we must know, grace is taken two wayes: first, for that fauour of God, whereby it pleaseth his maiestie to make vs his children which truly beleeue in Christ: and this is the fountaine of all grace, loue, and fauor. Now if grace be taken for this fauor of God in Christ, the though the outward signs and sensible feeling of Gods fauor in Christ may be lost; yet grace, that is, Gods fauor in Christ, cannot be lost. A father by some offence of his child may not shew signes of fauour to his sonne for a time, but rather his anger by words.

words or stripes: yet for all this he carieth a fatherly mind to him, not purposing to disinherit him. So when a true child of God sinneth, he then feeleth not the fauour of God, for he turneth his countenance from him for a time, yet not so that his fauor is wholly lost, but he still keepeth it towards vs, not purposing to disinherite vs in Christ: but is still our father, and we his children. Secondly, grace signifieth not onely Gods fauour, but the gifts of grace, as faith, hope, repentance, &c. which are bestowed on them which beleeeue. Now these graces be of two sorts, some necessarie to saluation, without which we cannot be saued: for without faith no man can be iustified, sanctified, or glorified. Now from true faith proceedeth true hope and loue, which three graces be especially necessarie to saluation, and especiall graces of Gods spirit. Secondly, there are other graces which be profitable and needfull, yet not necessarie to saluation: as feeling of Gods fauor, ioy and alacritie in inuocation of Gods name, feare, ioy, &c. and these are not so necessarie, but that a man which hath them not may be saued. Now then the three first, faith, hope, loue cannot be lost finally or wholly, being necessarie to saluation; but the other may: faith indeed may be weakened and wounded, but neuer lost wholly, but in part and for a time; and so it is said here of the Church of Ephesus.

First, that grace cannot be lost wholly and finally, these reasons proue, *Math. 16. 16.* Christ promised *Peter*, and in him the whole Church, that the gates of hell should neuer preuaile against him: for when he saith, they shall not preuaile, the meaning is, they shall shew very much strength, but shall not overcome or preuaile against the Church. Though they may be foyled, yet neuer overcome. The second reason is, if it were possible he should deceiue the elect of God, *Mat. 24. 24.* Christ taketh it for graunted, that they which beleene, which are truly iustified and sanctified, cannot fall finally, & so loose their faith. Thirdly, *Ioh. 10. 28.* Christ saith, his sheepe shall neuer perish. But they answer: that so long as they remaine the sheepe of Christ, they shall not perish: but Christ cutteth off that objection, saying, no man taketh them out of his hand, they shall not be able by their naturall corruption to fall, nor any man can.

take the out of my hands. The fourth reason, is *Ioh. 3. 36. He that beleueth hath eternall life*: they say, hopeth: but he which hath it in hope truly, he cannot loose it, seeing hope cannot make a man ashamed, *Rom. 5. 6.* and hope is grounded on faith, *Heb. 11. 1. Rom. 8. 30.* whom God predestineth, he calleth, iustificieth, sanctifieth, and glorifieth. Now if he which beleueth shall be iustified and glorified, then he cannot fall away: for he which falleth finally, shall neuer be glorified. Fifthly, in the end of the chapter, he saith, nothing can seuer him and the church of the Romanes from the loue of Christ, *ergo* not fall finally: for then they may be seuered. Sixthly, *Rom. 11. 29.* Gods gifts of saluation are without repentance, that is, the peculiar gifts of his spirit necessary to saluation, are without repentance. They say, God for his part repents not, but man reiects that grace whereof God repented not: but this makes Gods will subiect to the will of his creature, and makes man to rule God, to obey mans will seeing they make mans will to rule Gods will: man wils a thing, God wils it not, yet mans will must stand, which is absurd. A seventh reason, *1. Ioh. 3. 9.* he which is borne of God sinneth not, or cannot sin, because the seed of Gods word is in him. Now in the first chapter he saith, that he which saith he hath no sinne, lieth. *Iohn* then meaneth here, that he which truly beleueth, sinneth not, that is, sin ruleth not in him with whole consent, but in part. And man being partly flesh & partly spirit, as he is regenerate, sin proceeds not from him but as he is flesh. They answer: so long as he abideth borne of God: but when he ceaseth to be borne of God, he sinneth then with full consent: but he cuts of that quail and saith, Neither can sinne, seeing the seed of the word working by the spirit of God, maketh him continue that he cannot so sinne. Eighthly, If a man may fall wholly and finally, then he must be cleane cut off from Christ: for he must first be cleane cut from Christ, haue no coniunction with him, before he can loose grace wholly. Now if a man should be so often cut from Christ, as he looseth grace, then he should be often cut off, and often reunited to Christ: and if he should be so often reunited to Christ, then he should be so often baptised, for baptism is the sacrament of incision and ingrafting into Christ: but that is absurd, that baptism

baptisme should be any more then once administred: *ergo* a man is but once ingrafted, but once vnitod to Christ, and so cannot be reunited, and neuer fall. The last reason, We pray, *Leade vs not into temptation*: that is, suffer not Satan and sinne wholly to preuaile, and to conquer vs. Now in euery petition there are two things, first a commaundement to pray: secondly, a promise that we shall be heard: therefore seeing there is a promise in the word that no true child of God shall be wholly conquered of sinne or Satan, no true child of God can finally fall away.

Against these reasons are brought diuers arguments, and they are of three sorts: first, testimonies of scripture: secondly, examples: thirdly, equity. For scriptures they alleage these places. First (*Exod. 32. 33.*) *Moses* prayeth to God that he may be blotted out of the book of life: therefore he which is the true child of God may perish finally. *Ans.* His petition must be vnderstood with condition: if it be possible: and so Christ; let this cup passe if it be possible: else *Moses* should pray for that he knew was not possible, and so against his owne knowledge: for he knew it could not be that one priuate man should die for the people, or suffer eternal punishment for them. Againe, *Moses* in that petitiō doth principally shew his zeale and earnest loue he bare to Gods glory and the good of the people, in that he neglected his owne life, and desired that rather then God should want his glory, and they perish, he should rather die (if it were possible) eternally. So *Paul* desired to be accursed that the Iewes might be saued. *Rom. 9. 3.* Againe they vrge, If the righteous turne from his righteousness, he shall die, *ergo* a righteous man may perish. To these words I answer, there is a double righteousness, one of the outward action, another of the person: the first is, when a man keepeth the whole law outwardly, in respect of men: the second, in that a mans person is righteous by Christs righteousness before God. A man may haue the first, and yet be an hypocrite, and so it is meant here of the first not of the second, by which mā is in deed righteous before God. *Ans. 2.* It must be vnderstood of them which esteemed themselves righteous, they pleaded that their fathers sinned, & they were punished: so that they pretended they were iust, but were not so indeed. Another place is *Luke 8. 13.* there:

be some which beleueed for a time: *Ans.* There are three kinds of faith, as also of beleeuers, historicall, temporall, and true sauing faith: in the first is knowledge & assent to the word, yet no great ioy or reioycing in the second is also ioyned ioy and reioycing to the assent with approbation: but in sauing faith there is also apprehension of the promise of God to our selues, which is not in the other.

Now as of faith, so of beleeuers there be three kinds: one, which knoweth the word, and giueth assent to it, yet hath no great loue or liking of it: the second, he loueth it, reioyceth in it, but apprehendeth not the promise: but the third, he beleueeth, loueth, and apprehendeth the promise. Now the two first may fall away, but the last cannot fall away: and *Luke* is to be vnderstood of the two first, not of the last. But they obiekt and say, there is but one God, and one faith, therefore all faith is one. *Phil. 4. Ans.* That is, there is but one faith, one doctrine of saluation, and one religion: so faith is vsed in the word, and so it must be here vnderstood. Secondly, they proue it by exāples, as first of *Adam*: secondly, of *Dauid*. *Adam* he had grace sufficient, yet he in his innocencie fell from God, therefore much more we which haue not so much grace as he had. *Ans.* Though he had greater measure of grace, yet we haue more certaine and sure priuiledges of grace then he had: first, he had his grace by creation, we by redemption, which is greater then creation: secondly, he had the first grace not the second: but we haue the first grace and the second too by promise, which preserueth vs in the first grace, *Phil. 1. 6. 2. Thes. 1.* The Lord is faithfull to establish vs, & to keepe vs from euill. God giueth the first grace to beleuee and repent, and the second to make vs to continue in the same. They obiekt, *Dauid* fell from grace by two great sins: one of adulterie, the other of pride. *Ans.* He fell grievously, and the graces of God were sore decayed, weakned and wounded in him, not cleane extinguished: for then he should haue contēned God, his word and religion, & despaired of mercie, which he did not. This sheweth, he had the remnants of grace in his heart still, though weakened and wounded. *Ob. 3.* But he prayeth God to create in him a new heart. *Psal. 51.* therefore
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he had cleane lost grace. *Ans.* David speaketh there as he felt himselfe, not as he was in respect of God, for he felt in his conscience much trouble, and Gods wrath against him. 2. *Ob.* But he repented not of a whole yeare. Now, no repentance, no pardon; and no pardon, no grace. *Ans.* The gift of repentance was in him when he fell, and after, but the practise of it shewed it selfe not till that time that the Prophet came to him, he wanted not repentance simply, but now repentance in practise for that fact. Their third argument is from equitie of nature & common reason: a child of God may become the member of an harlot, now one cannot be the member of God and of the diuell, therefore a man may fall finally. *Ans.* There be three sorts of members, a dead, a decayed, and a lively member: the first is as a leg of wood or brasse: the second, as an arme or leg taken with a palsey: the third, a moving and lively member, as an hand sound and ready to moue. So in Christ there is a dead member, which is only in shew, not in deed: secondly a member decayed, dying but not dead, as a man by sin taken with a spiritual palsey which cannot feele grace flowing frō Christ: thirdly, a lively member which feeleth and liueth in Christ. Now a lively member of Christ, can not be the member of an harlot: but a decayed member, which is in the midst betweene dead and alive, that is the member of Christ and the member of an harlot; but being not dead but dying, shall be quickned againe: so a man is made the member of Christ spiritually, but the member of an harlot by carnall maner. They say further, if that men be so certaine of their saluation that they cannot fall away, then this shewes there is no need of the word, no need of preaching and exhortation. *Ans.* Though a man be certaine he cannot fall away, yet preaching and exhorting haue their vse, not onely to worke grace, but also to make men constant in grace, and to perseuere to the end: and though a man be certaine of his saluation, yet he must vse the meanes. *Paul* (*1 Cor.* 10. 12.) he knew that not one in the ship should perish, yet there must not one go out of the ship. *Esaie* (38) tels *Hezekiah* he should recouer, but he must vse the meanes, and so he did. But say they, this doctrine maintaineth grosse securitie, to teach that men are sure they cannot fall. *Ans.* There is a double.

securitie, one of the flesh, when a man giues himselfe to the pleasures and profits of this world, hauing no care or conscience of his owne saluation: secondly, there is a securitie of faith, when one relieth wholly on Christ in the matter of saluation. Now seeing that doctrine maintaines securitie, not of the flesh, but a spirituall securitie of faith and peace of conscience, it is not to be disliked, for it is a mans chiefe felicitie, when a man in life and death relieth wholly on Christ. Thus the answer to the question, is, that a true beleuer cannot loose faith, nor fall away from grace wholly or finally, but in part, and for a time.

vs. 1.

Seeing this decaying of loue was in this famous Church founded and preserved by the Apostles, then much more is it rise in our Church, seeing we haue not the like measure of grace that they had: then we must looke to our selues, see how we decay in loue to God, and to our neighbour; if we do, then we shall find that after long profession we haue decayed much in loue. And if we can excuse our selues, yet take heed of it: for seeing this famous Church was subiect to it, it cannot be but we are. As we see water which is once hot, if it be cooled, it will be more cold, and freeze harder then that which was neuer warmer: so he which hath bin indued and inflamed with the loue of God and his neighbor, and after waxeth cold, he wil be worse then he which neuer had that heate. The Hawke while she is fit to catch the prey, and lively to flie well, she is set on the hand of the King and Nobleman; but if she be old or dead, then she is cast off, or to the dung-hill: so when we loue God and our neighbour, with alacritie and chearefulnesse, then we are on Gods right hand, in his fauour and loue; but if we die and decay in loue, then we are in the ready way to be cast off, and cast away. Our loue to God is like a litle fire or flame: then we must not quench it and cast water on it, for that puts it out: so our sinnes they be as water, nay euery sin we commit it as a dish of water cast on the litle fire of our loue, and by it we do what we can to put out the fire of Gods grace: but we must do as the Priests did, who kept the fire on the altar, neuer let it out, but fed it continually: so we must cherish and preserve this fire, and carie wood to this fire dayly: secondly, we must stirre vp the grace of God dayly in vs, as we would

would lift up fire and blow it. Thirdly, that it may increase, we must exercise the workes of faith, loue, obedience, repentance, and godlinesse. For without these our loue to God and man, will soone decay and waxe cold.

2 *Remember therefore whence thou art fallen.* In these words Christ as a faithfull Pastor of our soules, prescribeth a most soueraigne remedie against the former vice, namely, decay in loue.

Now out of this, that Christ rebuketh not the Church of Ephesus, but withall giueth a soueraigne saluē for that sore, we learne that the doctrine of the law whereby sinne is reprobued, is to be taught; but withall the Gospell must be preached, seeing in it alone the remedie is to be had. Then must we imitate Christ: that is, preach the law in precepts and threatnings: and then the Gospell, seeing the law sheweth only the wound, the Gospell the remedie.

The general vse of this remedie standeth in answering to two questions: the first question is: A man is called effectually to beleeue and to professe the Gospell: but after his conuersion, by the diuell, the world, or his owne corruption, he sinneth and woundeth his conscience, how shall he recouer his owne estate? *Ans.* He must remember from whence he is fallen, and do his first workes. The second question is: A man hath liued in ignorance, after his owne lust, neuer called effectually, but now he is touched in conscience for his wicked life, how shall such an one be reconciled to God, and escape his iudgements? *Ans.* He must (saith Christ) remember from whence he is fallen by his first father Adam, and by his owne sinnes: secondly, he must repent of his sinnes past: and lastly, he must do his first workes, to which he was bound by the law of nature, and by the morall law of God.

Now in particular of the remedie. It containeth three parts: the first, *Remember whence thou art fallen*: the second, *And repent, and do thy first workes*: and in the end is a reason to moue them to do these duties: *or else I will remoue thy candlestickes*. The first part, *remember*: that is, remember, examine thy selfe thoroughly, that thou maist see thy decay in thy loue: and after that thinke on it often, and ponder it in thy heart. So that these

words inioyne them two duties: the first, to examine themselves: the second, to consider of their estate.

1 Examine: that is, enter into a diligent search of thine owne heart, search thine owne particular wants, especially this one want, thy decay in loue. Secondly, she must after examination, often thinke of her owne wants, and often lay them to her owne heart.

V/c. 1.

Hence we see it is a dangerous thing for any Christian, not to know his estate, not to be acquainted with his owne wants: *Ier. 8.* he blameth the people for this sinne: none among them said so much as *What haue I done*, none examined or considered his owne estate and wants. In the dayes of *Noah* they knew nothing till the flood came on them, they neuer looked to their owne estate, or regarded and considered Gods iudgements, or their owne sinnes and wants. And in our time this sinne is too common, not one of a thousand examineth his life, considereth his owne wants and sinnes: nay, now if a man turne his eye to see his owne sinnes, why then this is a meanes to worke melancholy in a man: and so most men flie this, which is so necessarie a discipline.

V/c. 2.

We see it is a speciall dutie of them which liue in the church, to be acquainted with their owne estate, to know and often consider their owne wants and sinnes: *Zach. 2.* When he beginneth to preach repentance, he biddeth them *search themselves*, or *sanne and winnow themselves*, as a man would search for a litle thing in an heape of chaffe. Then we must search our selues diligently and narrowly, yea the least thing in vs, as *Zacharie* biddeth his auditors. And after that we find wants in our hearts, we must consider of them seriously: for no man can repent truly till he know his owne estate thoroughly: then we must often consider it, and be well acquainted with it. *Psalme, 119. vers. 59. I considered my waies:* that is, I entred into my selfe, and finding mine owne wants, then I turned me to thee.

And here we see the very cause why so few repent truly, because they remember not whence they be fallen, and know not their owne estate. The second part is, *Repent*: first, when thou art well acquainted with thine owne estate, & knowest thy wants:

wants and finnes; then in the second place, repent.

In handling of this dutie, note five points: the first, what repentance is: the second, how it must be practised: the third, who commaundeth it: the fourth, who must practise it: the fifth, for what end. Repentance is first properly for the place of it, in the mind of man: for it is, after some folly, ouerslip, or error, to be better aduised, which is proper to the mind, and therefore repentance is properly of the mind. Againe, it is a change in the mind, as of an euill mind to become good, a turning from sinne to grace, from all sinne to God. *2. Cor. 7. 9. 10.* Now this turning from sinne to God standeth in a purpose and resolution, whereby a man by Gods grace purposeth to turne from all sinne, to serue the Lord and cleaue to him, in obeying his commaundements. First then there must be a purpose in the mind, from which proceedeth a turning of the whole man, in will, affections and action: which is the principall thing in repentance, namely the turning of the whole man from euill actions and affections, to renewed affections and renewed actions.

By this we see, that the common description of repentance is not good, in that they say it standeth in contrition, which is sorrow and remorse for sinne, which is no part of repentance, but may be a cause of repentance: godly sorrow indeed causeth repentance, but is nothing of the nature of it. *2. Cor. 7. 9. 10.*

Or else. That is, if you will not practise that remedie: to wit, renew your former loue and repentance: *I will come against thee*: or as the words be in the originall: *I will come to thee shortly*. The Lord cometh to a people two waies, in mercie, or iudgement: in mercie he cometh, when he testifieth his presence to them by shewing mercie: as when Christ in spirit came to the old world, and preached to them (as *Peter* saith) an hundred and twentie years. Secondly, he cometh in iudgement when he testifieth his presence in iudgement. So in the second Commaundement: *I will visite the finnes of the fathers*: that is, I will come and inquire of the fathers finnes, whether they be in their children, and will punish them. So here if the Church of Ephesus repent not, he will come to her, to testifie his presence in iudgement, not mercie. *1. Pet. 3. 19.*

177. 1.

Out of this first generall threatening, we may learne this one thing, when any people or Church lye in any one sinne, or decay in loue to God, his word and religion: he then prepareth himselfe to come to them in iudgement. *Amos. 4. 12.* he will punish them, because they returned not to the Lord, but lay in their sinnes: therefore he biddeth them prepare themselves to meete him. This we must apply to our selves, our Church and people: for the sinnes of the Church of Ephesus be our sinnes; we haue decayed in our first loue, since we heard the word first, we for the most part want loue to God and to man: and besides these sinnes we lye in many fearefull sinnes. Atheisme now abounds in iudgement and in practise, contempt of the worship of God, neglect and contempt of true religion, crueltie, oppression, and want of mercie: yet for all this, what man is it that prepareth to meete the Lord? So that he may iustly say, we do decay in loue: that, it is most true of vs, that the Lord hath bene long coming to vs for these sinnes in iudgement, in plagues and punishments: and so is he coming at this day, it hangeth ouer our heads, and if we continue still in sinne, he will surely come.

Thus then seeing the Lord hath bene long coming to vs, he would haue vs to repent: if we will not, no doubt he will come and that shortly, and remoue his Gospell, he will come in iudgements and punishments to destroy vs.

2. The second threatening is more particular: *I will remoue thy candlestick.* Here he sheweth in what particular iudgement he wil come to the: namely, to remoue her candlestick. In the former Chapter he compareth the Church to a candlestick: then when he saith he will remoue the candlestick, he meaneth his word and Gospell: take the ministerie of the word from her, and so make her become of a Church, no Church: and hauing remoued the Gospell, will in stead of it, send ignorance and blindness.

If thou repent not: that is, if thou continue stil in thy sin. In this second threatening note three things: first, concerning the minister: secondly, the Church and people: thirdly, euery priuat man. First, concerning the minister, if he decay in loue to God, his word and religion, if he continue and lie in his sinnes, or any one sinne,

finne, that is a meanes to depriue him of his office and calling, and of his gifts (for this is especially directed to the Angell) *Ier. 15. end.* The Prophet failing in his dutie, partly by feare, partly by want of patience: then the Lord he becomes a Prophet to *le-remy*, tels him, that vnlesse he returne to the Lord and repent, the Lord would make him no Prophet: so that in him he speaks to all Ministers, that if they would haue their callings and gifts to remaine, they must not liue in any one sin, decay in loue to God or religion, for then their callings and gifts shall be taken from them. As repentance is necessary for all men, so especially for Ministers, they must especially renew it, seeing that is the onely meanes to continue their callings and gifts. The second thing is, concerning a church or people: if any church or people decay in loue to God or his word: or lie in any one sin, they then procure the Lord to remoue his candlestick, to take from them his word, the Gospell and true religion. *Use. 9. 7. The Prophet is a foole, the man of spirits is mad:* a heauy iudgement, whereof comes this? He saith, for the sins of the people the Prophet, is ignorant, and becometh mad. If this be so, then we haue all cause to feare, that our finnes haue deserued the Gospell should be taken from vs: for in most men there is great decay in loue, seeing religion is hated and contemned of most men. Therefore we must needs feare; and the Lord for this must needs remoue his word, take his Gospell away, if we meet him not with repentance, for he in iustice giues men to beleue lies, when as they will not receiue his truth and Gospell, being so long among them. Our dutie then is to seeke to preuent this iudgement, by hearty and true repentance. The third point, concernes euery priuate man: euery priuat Christian, now a daies decayeth in loue to God and man, lieth in some one sinne or other, &c. Now these are the meanes to depriue him of the light of the Gospell, and his particular gifts, For as a mans loue decayeth, his knowledge decayeth, and so the Gospell and the loue to it wax cold. In a clock if the watch stand, all the wheelles stand, if it go softly or swiftly, the rest of the wheelles go accordingly: so if our loue be increased, our knowledge is so, if our loue decay our knowledge, our vnderstanding in religion decayeth. And this is the cause of

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so litle knowledge especially in auncient folke, because they loose their loue. *Heb. 4. 12.* First, we are deceiued by sin: secondly, our heart is hardened: thirdly, we call into question religion, 4. we set our selues against religion, and so fal from it, so that, decay in grace is the first cause of apostacy. Then if we would increase in knowledge and religion, we must seeke to be cleansed from sinne, not liue and die in any one sinne, neither decay in loue, knowledge, or affection to religion.

Some gather hence that a man may fall finally and wholly: for if a whole church may, much more one man: but the reason is not good, for there is great difference between one man and a whole church, for a church stands of a mixt company good and bad, sheepe and goates, corne and chaffe, wheat and tares. Now in the Church the wicked may fall and become false professors, as indeed these were, and yet the true beleeuers remaine stil. Now hence it followeth not, that a priuate man truly conuerted may fall.

Now followeth the condition of both the threatnings, *Except you amend:* that is, I come in iudgement to you, and take away the Gospell vnlesse you repent. Now we must marke that all threatnings in the old testament are with condition. So in *Jonah*, *Ted fortie dayes and Ninine shall perish*, that is, vnlesse they repent: and so are the threatnings in the new Testament with the same condition.

The wil of God, or his good pleasure, is one alone, & no more, what distinction soeuer men vse. Now his will is partly secret, & partly reuealed: his secret will is of those things which he hath not reuealed in his word, or by any work and experience to man: reuealed, is of those things he hath reuealed in his word, or else taught men by experience or euent. Now the reuealed will is with condition alway: but the secret will is not, but by it he willet all things, good things absolutely, and permitteth euill. And to make this will subiect to condition, were to bind God to his creature, but his reuealed will is with condition, as here in this place.

Obiect. Why doth God giue his reuealed will with condition? *Answer.* Because he reuealeth in mercie so much to man

as is necessary to saluation, and no more : and therefore he reuealeth it in that maner as may be most fit for his saluation. Now when he propounds his will with condition, that is best, for it keepes men more in awe, and seemes better for their saluation then if it were with without condition.

Now marke, Christ he repeates this condition in the beginning and end of this verse, that he will come to them, and he will punish them vnlesse they repent and amend. The reason is, to shew that when men lie in sinne, or decay to God and religion, then it is most necessary to repent : and it is so necessarie that there is no other way to stay God from remouing the Gospell, then repentance. Is this true? then it stands vs in hand, euerie man in his owne person, and in his familie, and in the Church publickly, to meet him with repentance : and so we must thinke of it, in that Christ doubles the condition.

But this thou hast that thou hatest the workes of the Nicolaitanes. Vers. 6. In these words is a second reason, to proue that (in the second verse) for which Christ commended her, that she could not abide them which were euill : first, because she examined them which receiue false teachers : secondly, she hated their workes. To come to the words, Nicolaitanes were a sect of heretickes, who held opinion, first that fornication and adulterie were no sinnes: secondly, that a man might keep companie with idolaters in sacrificing in the temple: and according to these two opinions, they practised fornication, adulterie and idolatrie. These were so called of one *Nicolas*, chosen of the Apostles to be a Deacon, *Act. 6*, who for a while professed the Gospell, but after fell away, and became head and chiefe of this sect of heretickes.

But: this note sheweth that these words haue reference to the words of rebuke before, as if he should say, though this decay of loue be thy fault, yet I commend thee for this one vertue, &c.

Here note our dutie, we must not (which is a common sinne) be so readie to blase our brethrs faults, to speake of them, paint them out in their colours as we are : but we should as well commend their vertues, and not obscure them: for Christ, though he

found fault, yet finding this vertue commends her, so should we.

Thou hatest. Here note this point: that it is not sufficient for a man to haue good gifts and graces, for he may haue them and be no member of Christ, but be in danger to be cut off from Christ. So was *Iehu*, he had great zeale. So *Iudas* had many good gifts no doubt being an Apostle, yet fell from Christ. So the Ephesians had an hatred of the sins of the Nicolaitans, yet were in danger to be cut off from Christ. Then we must labour for that which is the maine point of all, which if we haue, we cannot fall, which is, true, heartie, and vsfained repentance, daily and renewed repentance, for daily and new finnes.

Thou hatest the workes. Here see our dutie, we must labour to know the finnes and heresies of our times, and when we know them, we must hate them; for which Christ commends them, and will commend vs if we do the like.

The workes of the Nicolaitanes: not their persons. So then we must moderate our hatred, it must be for the finnes of men: we must hate their finnes, not their persons, whether they be friends or foes.

Obiect. But *David* he hated mens persons, he prayed for the destruction of his enemies, both soule and body. *Ans.* He did it being an extraordinary Prophet, and it was no doubt reuealed to him, that his enemies were obstinate, and would not repent; and so prophecieth by speciall and extraordinary instinct: for euery imprecation in the scripture is as a prophecie. But we which want that extraordinary instinct, must keep vs within this compasse, that we hate onely their finnes, and not their persons.

The workes of the Nicolaitanes: in whom note the ioyning of two finnes together, adultery and idolatrie; for adultery is the punishment of idolatrie, and idolatrie is the punishment of adulterie: the one being carnal fornication, the other spiritual, and the punishment of adulterie: and so in all hereticall churches the Lord he sends these together in iudgement; to punish spirituall adultery with temporall fornication. If a church become idolatrous, then he giues them over to commit fornication and uncleannesse.

cleanneſſe. So among the Iſraelites, and in the Romiſh church falling to idolatry, they abound alſo with adulterie and fornication.

Thou hateſt their workes. Here we may learne one leſſon, for we ſee many men ſeeing ſuch diuerſitie of opinion in matters of religion, they will be of no church, they will be of no religion. But ſeeing in the beſt Churches planted and guided by the Apoſtles, euen in their dayes, there were ſuch heresies, as theſe Nicolaitans held, no maruell if there be ſchiſmes and heresies in our dayes: yet theſe ſhould not make vs leaue the church, but ſeek to be of the true religion, and ſtand faſter to it.

Which I alſo hate. Chriſt hauing now commended her, would haue her to go on: and to encourage her therein, he ſetteth his example for them to follow: thou hateſt their workes, that is well done, do ſo ſtill: for ſo do I. And here we ſee Chriſt requireth that we ſhould be of the ſame mind, iudgement, will, and affection that he is of: and there is good cauſe why we ſhould, ſeeing he is the head, we the members; we are bone of his bone, fleſh of his fleſh. Now then we muſt ſee that there be a conformity betweene the head and the members, we muſt hate that he hateth, loue that he loueth, & ſo ſhew that we be true Chriſtians and members of Chriſt. *Ob.* Chriſt he hateth wicked men, why then ſuffereth he them to liue, & deſtroyeth the not, or taketh them out of his Church? *Anſw.* He ſuffereth them for iuſt cauſe: for he can bring good out of euill, light out of darkneſſe, he can turne that which is moſt wicked in it ſelfe to his glorie, and the benefite of his Church and children, and the deſtruction of his enemies. Then no maruel though he ſuffer them which he hateth.

Let him which hath an eare heare what the Spirit ſaith, &c. In this verſe Chriſt inferreth this concluſion vpon the former words. It containeth in it two parts: the firſt, a comendement the ſecond, a promiſe. A comendement: *Let him that hath eares,* &c. A promiſe, in the end of the verſe: *For to him will I giue of the tree, &c.* and this concluſion ſerueth to ſtirre vp the Church of Ephesus, to conſider of the former things Chriſt taught her.

In the comendement is three things: the firſt, who be co-

maunded, *He which hath an eare*: secondly, what is commanded: namely, to *heare*: thirdly, the thing which must be heard: *What the Spirit saith*.

The parties commaunded to heare are described; they which haue an eare: that is, which can heare. *Mat. 13.* Christ expoundeth it, he which hath an eare to heare: that is, an hearing eare: he must heare, and giue attention to the word.

By this we see, there be two kinds of hearers: one is a deafe hearer, not hauing an hearing eare; as those which bring outward and bodily eares to the word, but not the eares of the hart: for their hearts are not affected with the word, they cannot obey that they heare. Secondly, there is an hearing hearer, who not onely heareth with the outward eare of the bodie, but he hath his heart pierced and touched, hath new eares made by Gods spirit: this is he which bringeth both the eares, his head, and heart to the word, who is affected with it, applyeth it to his owne heart, and beleeueth the word heard. Such an eare had *David*: the Lord God bored his eare, and made him new eares, euen eares of heart: *Mine eares hast thou opened*. And when the Lord spake to him: hauing new eares, he answereth the Lord, *Lo I come*, his heart heard the Lord. Such eares had *Isaiah*, *Send me*. Such had *Lydia*, her eares were opened, and she became attentive to *Pauls* words: the Lord gaue her new eares.

Seeing Christ maketh this distinction of hearers on earth, then grace is not vniuersall: sauing grace is not giuen to euery particular man, that he, if he will, may heare and haue saluation: for there must be some deafe hearers as well as hearing hearers. Then all cannot heare, nor haue eternall life, seeing all cannot come to faith and repentance by hearing. Nay though God admit all into the Church, yet he giueth not grace to euery one to heare, so that he becometh a profitable hearer, to belecue and repent by hearing. *Mat. 13. It is giuen to you to know*, not to others: noting that some onely haue the spirit of God to heare, to know his will, and become obedient to the same.

Seeing the commandement is giuen to hearing hearers, we must labour to become such, to become good hearers, not to bring

Esa. 6.
Act. 17.

bring onely the eares of the bodie to the word : but the eares of the heart, not onely eares of our bodie which we haue by creatiō, but the eares of our soules which we haue by regeneration: and neuer thinke our selues well, till we haue that hearing of the heart, to beleue and obey that we heare, & can affect the same, and be changed and turned by it. *Iosab* heard the law, and that not with bodily eares, but with his heart, so that he turned to the Lord accordingly. *Dauid* (*Psalm. 26.*) God biddeth him seeke him: he hauing his eares bored anew, maketh answer: Lord, I will seeke thy face. Take heed then of deafe eares, when we heare the word daily, not profiting by it, are not changed in life: for this deafe eare is a fearefull iudgement of God, that men hearing, should not heare nor obey, and be bettered by that they heare. And yet this is our common hearing: for the most part we come, bring our bodily eare to the word, but our hearts hearken not, they obey not that we heare: but we remaine as blind and ignorant, and as full of sinne as euer, and that after long hearing. Which sheweth we are indeed deafe hearers.

The second point is the dutie commanded: namely, to heare. Hearing in the word of God, is not onely listening with the bodily eares, but to be attentue to the word, and with attention to adde faith, repentance, conuersion and obedience to it: for we if we be good hearers, then we must heare so as we be changed from the corruption of the old man, and learne to beleue in Christ. *Eph. 4. 21.* and as much as we practise and obey, so much we learne: for we heare no further then we obey. Then seeing we must so heare the word, we must suffer our selues to be chaunged and altered, labour to obey the word, and to be changed by it. And except we thus heare, the word is not to vs the sauer of life, but of death: and as the good hearing is the readie means to saluation, so the deafe hearing, is to destruction.

The third point which is commaunded by God: namely, *that which the Spirit speaketh*. The thing which we must heare with attention, faith & obedience, is repentance for our wants and sinnes: for of that Christ spake afore. Then this is a most necessarie thing, for men to consider their owne wants and sinnes,

and the iudgement of God for them: for else Christ would not haue added these words, for the conclusion of the Epistle: who hauing shewed the their wants, and the remedie, and the iudgement of God for the sinnes, he addeth this. caueat, which sheweth the necessitie of these things.

¶

Then it standeth vs vpon to consider our own personal wants, our sinnes, and the wrath of God against them: for, the omitting of this dutie is the bringing of Gods iudgement vpon vs; and the practise of it is the preuenting and turning away of Gods iudgements. And as priuate men of their personall sinnes, so must countries & cities in generall, remeber their wants, & sins, and do their first workes. In the end of the verse, are two reasons to moue them to heare: the first, because the things spoken, are spoken by the Spirit, that is, the holy Ghost, the third person in Trinitie: the second, because he speaketh not to one or two, but to all the Churches in one. *Ob.* But how can the Spirit speake these words, seeing Christ speaketh them? *Ans.* Both may stand: for all outward actions of the persons in Trinitie are common to them all: and seeing this, to teach the Church, is an outward action, it belongeth to all three: and that the Father doth, the Sonne doth; and what the Sonne doth, the holy Ghost and the Father do, in outward actions. Secondly, Christ after his ascension teacheth not bodily, but by his spirit: for Christ being at his Fathers right hand, sendeth his comforter to leade vs into all truth. Now seeing the holy Ghost speaks in the Scripture, & he teacheth vs, we see how the church of Rome sinneth, in that they will haue a iudge which must speake: for Christ he being in heauen, and the Scriptures being not able to speake, but are as a dumme iudge: therefore the Church, that is, men in the Church, they must be iudge of Scriptures. But we see that the holy Ghost speaketh in the Scriptures, and Christ he is iudge alone of them. The Church is an instrument onely, and cannot giue sentence of them, but they be of themselves sufficient to take away any doubt whatsoever.

2 Faith is no part of repentance, but a cause of it: for they be 2 distinct parts of Christianity: the first, a sermon, *believe* and *repent*, where repentance followeth faith, as a fruite of it. Thirdly, obedience.

obedience is no part of repentance, but a cause thereof: *ergo* repentance stands not in these three properties: neither is all one with regeneration, for this goeth before them: for godly sorrow is the cause of repentance, but regeneration is before godly sorrow, *ergo* before repentance too. The second point is, how we must practise repentance: this stands in two things: first true humiliation: secondly, true reformation of life. Humiliation stands in confessing our sins, miseries and wants, and in condemning our selves for them, and in hartly praier to God for pardon. Reformation is the changing of our bad actions to good, and if need require to make satisfaction to men. *David* (Psal. 32.) first humbled himselfe, secondly he prayed for pardon, and withall promisseth reformation of life, *Manasses* fel from God, but he prayed to God, & humbled himselfe. 2. *Cron.* 33. 12. So the prodigal son. And *David* in all these Psalmes of repentance humbles himself. Psal. 32. 38. 51. 130. 143. 77. And so must we do, if we truly repent.

Then we see the danable doctrine of the Papists, which make repentance stand in contrition, and confession of sins to a Priest, satisfaction: for a man may do all these, and yet be a reprobate. So did *Indas*, he had contrition, confessed his sinne, made satisfaction, and yet his repentance was not true repentance. Another abuse is, that they make contrition a part of repentance, which is indeed no grace, but may be a cause of grace. Besides, to confesse all sinnes to a priest, is a gibbet to a mans conscience, and more then God himselfe requireth. Last of all, to teach that a man must satisfie Gods iustice, is to overthrow the satisfaction of Christ.

The third point is, Who commaunds this? It is Christ. Now some out of these words gather, that God giueth sufficient grace to euery man, to repent if they will: for (say they) if he command repentance, and yet some cannot, then he but mockes them, and it is as if we should bid one, bound hand and foot, to rise and walke. *Ans.* The Lord giueth not that commandement to euery particular man, but to the Church, or to some people which shal become a Church; and then he doth it to gather the elect. Now in the Church there be elect and reprobate: now this comman-

dement to repent, is giuen to the elect directly, but to the reprobate by consequence, as they be among the elect in the church. And this commaundement is giuen to both, for diuers ends: first to the elect, to shew them what they ought to do, not their ability what they can do: secondly, that it may be an outward means to bring them to repentance: for when he giueth them this commaundement, he is present by his spirit, *Phil. 2.12*, he bids them work out their saluation: but addeth, God giueth the will & the deed: shewing that God giuing that commaundement, is present by his spirit, to worke in them abilitie to performe it. Now the wicked being in the Church haue the same commaundement, not directly, neither to those ends, but first to keepe them in outward ciuill order, secondly to make them without excuse. But whereas they reason thus: If Christ command all to repent, then all haue sufficiēt grace to repēt: but the first is true, *ergo. Ans.* The first part is false, vnles it be restrained thus, if he command to this very end, that they should repent and practise it: for he giueth commaundement to some, not that they may do it, but as to *Pharaoh*, to harden their harts. For the second part, that he giueth commaundement to all; the meaning is, he giueth it onely to the elect directly, because he giueth them his spirit to obey it, but to the wicked by consequence, as they be mingled in the Church with his owne children.

The fourth point is, who must repent, namely, the Angel and whole Church of Ephesus. *Ob.* But they had repented before, how then doth he bid the repent againe? *Ans.* There are two degrees of repentance: one is the beginning, the other is the renewing of it. In the practise of which two, stands the whole life of a Christian: first, to begin to repent when he is truly called: and secondly, in continuing and renewing it dayly as he often falleth. If we haue begun by Gods grace, we must not stay there, but go on and be renewed every day. There is no man but he shall see in him selfe daily new sins, slips, and wants, for which he must haue renewed repentance.

Vse.

Then seeing we dayly increase our sins, we must take heed we lie not or continue in sin, without this repentance: for we are not so much condēned for sin, as for lying in sin: this, if a man repent, brings

brings not condemnation, but lying in sin doth: then aboue all things take heed of this, & let vs daily labour to know our sins, to be acquainted with our wants, to humble our selues & pray for pardon. 2. *Cor.* 5. 20. I beseech you (saith *Paul*) be reconciled to God: they were reconciled before, for they were iustified and sanctified: but he would haue them to labour to be more assured of their iustification, and to haue a more full and sensible feeling of it, and that because their apprehension by reason of their weaknes is but sin all. The like must be had of vs.

The fift point, is why or for what cause, namely, for their decay in loue especially, and other wants: Christ prescribeth to the repentance, not that they had none at all. And so Christ preacheth to vs by his Ministers, to repent of this decay in loue: if we haue had loue and feele it now decayed, we must repent: if we haue not, then we must labour to haue it. And Christ (we see) giueth a large commaundement, not for drunkennesse, whooredome, theft, or such grosse sins; but euen for their decay in loue, want of knowledge, faith, feare, &c.

The common people be of the Pharisies and Iusticiaries mind, that they need no repentance, seeing they liue ciuilly, not tainted with horrible and grosse sins: but we must repent for other sins, as want of knowledge, loue, obedience, &c. otherwise we cannot truly repent. Now if we must repent of al sins, much more of notorious sins, as of Atheisme, which now abounds and spreads abroad: of pride in apparell, contempt of the Gospell, which increaseth in all places: for want of mercie, for crueltie, and for those sinnes which can sooner remoue the candlestick from vs.

Now the remedie is, *to do their first workes*, to returne to their first loue, to God, his word, and to man. This is in the last place, seeing this repentance neuer perisheth or decayeth, but must be euer renewed.

So then he would haue vs also to remember what good thoughts, affections, & actions we haue had, to get them againe, and neuer loose them after. We must remember to do our first workes, which the Lord graunted to vs at our first calling, them we must labour to do againe.

Verse 5:

Or else I will come against thee shortly. Whenas our Saviour Christ had rebuked the church of Ephesus for decay in loue, and set downe the remedy, first to remember whence she was fallen, secondly to repent, thirdly to do her first works: in these words he layeth downe a reason to moue her to vse the remedie, especially to repent; if she will not, then he will come against her shortly. This containeth three parts: first a geneall threatening or cōminatiō; or els I wil come to thee: secondly, a particular threatening, and will remoue thy candlestick: thirdly, a condition of the two threatnings, except you repent. Because he speaketh to all Churches, this shewes our dutie in reading or hearing the word, that we apply all that is spoken, of one man, or to one Church, to our selues: when we see any vertues commended, we must imitate them, or vices discommended, we must search our selues whether we be cleane of them.

The promise, *To him which ouercommeth, &c.* hath two parts, first to whom it is made, namely, *to him which ouercommeth*: secondly, what is promised, *I will giue him of the tree of life*, namely eternall happinesse.

The partie to whom, is he which preuaileth against all his spirituall enemies, the diuell, the world, hell, death, and his owne flesh.

That we may overcome these, three things are necessary: first a man must be borne anew, become a new creature in Christ. 1. *Iohn. 5.* for when a man is borne anew, he is free from sinne, and ouercommeth all his enemies. Secondly, he must haue true faith, by vertue whereof he must deny himselfe, and wholly rely on Christ, 1. *Iohn 5.* *We overcome the world by our faith*: for he which truly beleueth in Christ, he is partaker of Christ, of his victory ouer death, hell, sinne and the diuell, and hath his naturall corruption abolished and weakned. Thirdly, that we stand against all our enemies with faith and good conscience to the end. And he which hath these three, he is able to resist all these his enemies.

To them which overcome. Ergo it is false, that the promise of the Gospell belongs to all men without exception, that God offereth life and saluation to all, vnlesse they will reject it: for saluation

uation is promised onely vnto them which are borne anew, which haue faith in Christ, denying themselves, and they which stand out against all their enemies, by faith and good conscience to the end of their dayes. Is this so? is the promise made onely to conquerers? we must then labour to be conquerers, to overcome all our spirituall enemies: but to liue in sinne, to be the seruants of Satan, that is, slauerie and hell it selfe: and for a man to say in truth of heart, that he hath overcome all these his enemies, this is freedome and happinesse. And though a man be neuer so great among men, yet if he be the vassal of sinne an Satan, he is out of the fauour of God, and most miserable. Secondly, the thing promised is life eternall, which is set out by two circumstances: first, by the cause of it: *I will giue*: secondly, what, *to eate of the tree of life*. In which words is an opposition betwene Adam and Christ: for Adam by his sinne deprived himselfe of the tree of life, but Christ hath set open the tree of life, that we may haue free access to it. Adam he lost an earthly paradise, Christ hath prepared an heauenly paradise. The tree of life stood in the midst of the garden, whereof Adam did eate. It was called the tree of life, first, because it was a sacrament, that is, a signe and pledge to him of eternall life, if he had continued in his estate. Secondly, because this tree had a vertue in it from God, to preserve Adam for euer from death and old age, and to make him continually to liue, if he stood. This tree of life was a true figure of Christ the Redeemer and Sauour: for as that tree had vertue in it from God to preserve Adams life, so that he should haue liued for euer, and be kept from old age: so Christ Iesus the Mediator and Redeemer, he liueth, not onely as he is God, but as he is man, and not for himselfe alone, but to conuey quickening vertue to all which beleue in him, and are partakers of his merits by a true faith.

To eate of the tree. To eate signifieth sometime to beleue, as *Ioh. 6. 50.* but it cannot be so here, seeing we cannot in heauen beleue in Christ: but to eate of that tree, is to haue immediate fellowship and communion in heauen with Christ for euer. For Christ shall be to vs a tree of eternall life for euer, yea all in all to euery one of vs. In this first point of the promise, note two

things: the first, wherein consisteth eternall life, namely, in immediat fellowship & cōmunion with Christ in heauen for euer: and this is our true felicitie, to eate of the tree of life, to partake with Christ in heauen, who shall be to his all in all, that is, all happinesse that heart can wish. Therefore it standeth not in outward meanes, as meate drinke, apparell, sleepe, respiration, recreation, &c. but in the eating of the tree of life, that is, in the immediate fellowship with Christ Iesus for euer.

Secondly, the place of this tree is, the *midst of paradise*: where Christ putteth a difference between the tree of life in the earthly paradise, and this in the heavenly paradise. He saith in *paradise*, that is, in the third or highest heauē, a place of ioy and pleasure, where the Lord especially sheweth his glorie, and where he prouideth happinesse for his children. There are indeed three heauens: one where we liue and breath, and where the clouds be: the second, where the starres be: the third is the place where the Lord sheweth his presence, and where he will haue his children be. Of this *Paul* speaketh, when he was rapt vp to the third heauen. 2. *Cor.* 12. It is called *Paradise*, because it is a place of pleasure, for so the word signifieth. *Of God*: that is, most excellent, and most infinite. For so *Gen.* 30. 8. *Rabell* wrestled with *Leah* with wrestlings of God, that is, excellent or great wrestlings. So in the Psalmes, to shew how huge and high the hilles were, *David* calleth them the hilles of God, the mountaines of God, that is, excellent or huge mountaines. So here he calleth it the paradise of God, to shew, it is a place most excellent, full of pleasure and ioy. This place is set out at large, *Reu.* 22.

Then seeing this is so excellent a place, we should labour above all things to come thither, to weane our minds from earthly paradise, which is but a prison, and lift our heads vp to heauen, set our hearts and minds on things above. *Phil.* 3.

Vers. 8. And to the *Angell of the Church of Smyrna*, write.

From this eighth verse to the twelfth, is the second Epistle or letter, to another Church of Asia, namely, to the Church of Smyrna. And before this second Epistle, is a second particular commandement to *Iohn* for the writing of it, in these words,

And

And to the Angell of the Church of Smyrna, write: which particular commandement is prefixed before the Epistle, to assure them and every Church, that *S. John* had sufficient calling to write the same, and that he did it not of himselfe. And so should all they which come to speake or write the word of God, haue a sufficient calling, that so the Church may receiue their doctrine, and without doubt belecue the same as the true word of God. So the Ministers of the Gospell must haue their calling: for if the Apostles of Christ, which were of more excellent gifts had it, then, such which be but ordinarie men. This commandement and the meaning of it, is in the first verse of this Chapter.

After the particular commandement is the Epistle it selfe, standing of three parts: first, a Preface: secondly, a Proposition: thirdly, a Conclusion. The preface or entrance is in the eighth verse, and containeth a preparation to the matter of the Epistle to be deliuered. In the preface he sheweth in whose name it is to be deliuered: namely, in Christ: *He which is, and was, which is the first and last.* This he doth for two causes: first, to stirre the Church of Smyrna to a religious care, and receiuing of the same as the pure word of God: secondly, because no commandement concerning religion and Gods seruice, is to be propounded in the name of any creature, but onely in the name of God and Christ. Now this Epistle being concerning religion and Gods worship, he propoundeth it in Christ his name alone. And Christ in this preface is described by two notable arguments: first, that he is first and last: secondly, that he was dead but is aliuē: but these words are expounded in the first Chapter, where he saith, he is first and last, that is, he is euerlasting God, which hath neither beginning nor end, afore all creatures & after all. He was dead but now liueth, that is, being God, tooke vpon him our nature, became subiect to death, and rose to giue euerlasting life to vs. In which words note two points of doctrine: first, that Christ is a person consisting of two natures: namely, his Godhead and manhood: for as he is said to be first and last, he must be God: and as he was dead but now is aliuē, he is man: and as the bodie and soule make one man, so the Godhead and manhood of Christ, concurre to make one Christ. The

Dist. line 1.

second point of doctrine is a comfort, or the foundation of all ioy and comfort to the Church of God: first, that he is God, *ergo* he is able: secondly, he is man, *ergo* he is willing to helpe, to deliuer his Church from all miseries, or else ease them: for he is first and last, *ergo* true God, *ergo* able to helpe: Secondly, he was dead but liueth, therefore willing (seeing he came to take our nature vpon him) to be subiect to death, and to rise againe to giue to vs eternall life. So then, this is the scope and end of these words, to comfort the Church in miserie: and hence is the very fountaine of all comfort in this life. If the Lord lay any crosse on thee, as persecution, tribulation, miserie or calamitie, then consider these two things: Christ is God able to helpe, he is man willing to deliuer thee. And this may be a proppe to stay and hold vs vp, that we sinke not in persecutions or crosses.

I know thy workes. After the Preface, followeth the Epistle it selfe, containing the matter and contents to be deliuered to the Church of Smyrna, in the ninth and tenth verses. The Epistle hath two parts: first, a commendation of the Church: secondly, counsell for her concerning time to come. The commendation is in the ninth verse, *I know thy workes*. In these words as there is a commendation of her, there is also a comfort: for he doth not onely commend her, but comfort her being in miserie. *I know thy workes*. We heard these words before expounded: I know, that is, I see thy workes, wayes, dealing, the course and tenour of thy life, I know and approue of the same, it liketh and pleaseth me well.

In that Christ saith, he knoweth her workes, here is a notable propertie of Christ, that he seeth all Churches, he beholdeth all mens actions, he seeth their words, workes, affections and actions. As he spake to the Church of Ephesus before, so now to the Church of Smyrna, to shew them, that he is alwaies present in the midst of the Church, he seeth and beholdeth all her dealings. And this consideration is most necessarie, and the ground of all grace and religion, when a man is perswaded that Christ seeth his heart, heareth euery word, beholdeth all his actions, and marketh all his words. *David 139. Psalme: The Lord beholdeth all my secrets, there is not a word in my tongue, but he*

he knoweth it. So should we perswade our selues: and this would make vs make conscience of all our words, our thoughts, our actions, of all we do or say; nay, where this is wanting, there is no true grace, no faith, no conscience: for if a man were perswaded that Christ seeth his workes, beholds and markes them, he durst not for his life sinne as he doth.

And thy tribulation. Here he ioynes workes and tribulation together, where we may gather, that tribulation must needs go with workes, and with the grace of God: where grace is, there must be tribulations; where God giueth grace, he addeth tribulation, first to humble them, secondly to trie them, thirdly to preuent other sinnes which they should else commit.

I know thy tribulation. This then is added to comfort the Church: as if he should say, It is true, thou art in tribulation, but it comes not by chance, but from God my father: I know it, I see and behold it, and haue care of it to do thee good, Psal. 113. This knowledge is ioyned with his providence ouer his. This I say is spoken to comfort vs: if we be in tribulation, we must then consider whence it cometh, namely, from God, he knoweth, and seeth, and careth for it: this will ease vs of much griefe, and make vs patient. So we hauing had long peace, must looke for tribulation; which when it cometh, the onely way to arme vs with patience, is to consider that God both seeth it and knoweth it, and is & will be a stay and prop to vphold vs, that we faint not in misery. After he setteth out two sorts or parts of tribulation: first, pouertie: secondly, reproch. The first is pouertie, namely, want of temporall blessings, necessary to maintaine this present life.

Now seeing that famous Church was so afflicted with pouertie: we learne, that true Religion will not free a man from affliction and from pouertie: then let no man think because he beleeueth in Christ, he shal be rich. *Obiect.* But God promiseth the fauours and blessings of this and the other life to his seruants. *Ans.* He promiseth indeed, but the blessings concerning the kingdom of heauen without exception, & temporall blessings with condition, if they be for our good and his glory, else he will send want and pouertie, euen to his dearest seruants.

I know thy pouertie: This is added to comfort her, for that her estate in earthly things was weake; yet Christ knoweth it, he cares and provides for her, and will if it be for her good, free her or else giue her patience.

Obiect. But how can her workes and pouertie stand together, seeing she could not giue to the poore that wanted? *Ans.* All good workes stand not in giuing large almes to the poore, but the workes of our calling done in faith and good conscience, they be good workes, though the other haue their place, if they be done as they shold: for though workes in our calling be most meane, yet it is a good work to God. It is not the matter of the work, but the maner of doing it makes a good work, namely, if it proceed from an honest heart, and be done to Gods glory.

Yet thou art rich. Here Christ intends to comfort her, that though she wanted & was in pouerty, yet she was rich in Christ, she had riches in God, *Luke* 12. 21. And this in two respects, first when we are reconciled to God in Christ, & haue assurance of the pardon of our finnes in him, *2. Cor.* 8. 9. Secondly, when we haue grace from God to do good workes. *1. Tim.* 6. 18. That we may be rich in good workes, we must lay vp a good foundation in heauen, for Gods graces they be true riches.

vs.

The poore man, to whom God denieth riches in this world, he seeing his estate, must labour to haue riches in heauen, which are true riches indeed. This is to be reconciled to God in Christ, to haue Gods graces, whereby he can do the workes of his calling, in faith and a good conscience. Againe, the men of this world, if they would be truly rich, they must labour to be reconciled to God in Christ: but they content themselves with their owne riches, and neuer seeke for true riches indeed, but are choaked with the desire of temporall riches. But all men labour to get earthly riches, honour and temporal blessings, and esteeme not to be rich in God; which is meere madness.

The second part of her tribulation, is her reproch. *And thy blasphemie*, that is, the slander, reuillings and repoches of the Church of Smyrna. This was not onely in respect of God, but of their profession and religion: for they did reuile and slander them for their profession.

The

Where we see, that they which serue God, they must looke for slander, reuiling, reprochings. He which desires to liue well, to worship and serue God, he must look for these: nay if he haue them not, he must suspect himselfe, for Christ calleth them cursed whom all men speake well of: which though it be a great griefe, yet Christ comforts them, he knoweth it, seeth it, and will in due time remedie it: he seeth euery slander, defamati-
2. King. 24.
1. Cor. 4.
 on and reproach; which should make vs patient to endure these blasphemies.

The persons which blasphemed her, *They which say they be Iewes, but be not: but are the synagogue of Satan.* That is, as in other cities of Asia & Europe, there were assemblies of Iewes, that had their abode and synagogues, so in Smyrna had they assemblies & a synagogue, perswading themselves they had a true church, but that the other had not, and therefore slandered them for their religion, and their Christ, whom these professed, they denied. They were Iewes by birth, coming of the tribe of Iudah, yet not true Iewes in profession and worship of God, but a synagogue of Satan. And so they which reproch religion, which reuile the worshippers of God, they be Iewes by birth, but they are not Iewes indeed, but enemies to God, to religion, and to the which professe it. Now concerning these, let vs examine first what they were in their own opiniõ: secondly in Christs opiniõ.

Which say they be Iewes: They coming of the tribe of Iudah, they thought they were true worshippers of God, as *Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob* were: but Christ he saith, they be the synagogue of Satan. And as the Iewes (enemies to God and religion) seeme to themselves to be true professors: so all the wicked blesse themselves in their sinnes, thinke all is well they do, as we may see *Psal. 10.* they ouerthrow the truth of God by damnable heresies, yet perswade themselves they hold the truth, for which they wil die: yea witches, men and women, wil say they abhorre the diuell, they will not haue any thing to do with him: but that by good Angels, and some speciall gift of God, they excell other men; & are able to work wonders. And so the carnal Protestant, he sinneth and saith God is mercifull, and so makes Christ his packe-horse. But we must learne by their example to suspect our

selues, to cast downe our pride and conceit of our selues, and not thinke too highly of our owne goodnesse, but to suspect our selues for many finnes. We may not say we are Iewes when we are not.

The second point is, Christs iudgement of them, he saith they seemed to be Iewes, but were not, but indeed the synagogue of Satan, that is, a company and assembly of men which seemed to serue God, but worshipped the diuell.

Obiect. But they were Gods chosen people, whom he chose out of all nations to serue him: how then could they be the synagogue of Satan? *Answer.* There is a double election: first speciall and particular, whereby God in his eternall counsell chooseth one to saluation: the second is more general, whereby he admits men into the outward Church, to be partakers of the outward signes and priuiledges of the couenant, as the sacraments, &c. The Iewes they had the generall calling, but not the particular election, *Rom. 9.* and so might fall from the Church of God to be a synagogue of Satan: for hauing only the generall election, they might renounce the word and sacraments, but the particular election is immutable. Now let vs see when they became thus the synagogue of Satan: it was not at that time when they put Christ to death: for though many of the did it of knowledge, yet very many of ignorance. And after that Christ was ascended, *Peter* preaching to them, tels them, that the promise belonged to them, and to their children. It was not then at this time, but when the Apostles had laboured by many arguments, to proue that Christ was the Messiah, and they would not beleue, still remaining in their wickednesse, then they became of the church of God a synagogue of Satan: for when they wold not heare *Paul*, but threatned and reiected him, then he left them, and preached to the Gentiles, and then the Iewes became of a Church no Church: for the holding of an heresie makes a church to become no Church: but when a Church holds error in principall points of religion, and is openly conuicted by publicke authoritie and iudgement, and stil remaines so, then it ceaseth to be a Church, and not before, though it be reprobued by a private man, for that is not sufficient. So the Church of the Galatians holding

holding iustification by workes, yet ceased not to be a Church till it was convicted publicly by authoritie Apostolicall. And by this we see what we may iudge of the Papists, Libertines, Familie of loue, &c. which being convicted by publique iudgement of the Church of God, are no true Churches: for they hold such heresies, as be condemned in the word, and haue bin convicted long agoe of them. I come to the cause why they fell, namely, their vnbeleefe. *Rom. 11. Ob.* But they hold the Scriptures, and defend *Moses*, and the law. *Answ.* Though they hold the letter, yet they corrupt the sense, and where any thing is spoken of Christ, they seeke to ouerthrow it, and so taking away the subiect and matter of the Scripture which is Christ, they ouerthrow all: for he which worshippeth God not in, but out of Christ, he worshippeth not God but an Idoll. So the Papists hold the Scriptures in word, but in deed denie them, seeing they take away Christ, in spoiling him of his merit and intercession: for take away his offices, and then you shall haue an halfe Christ. This their example should be euer in our eyes, seeing these Iewes, Gods own chosen people, who he chose out of the whole world to serue him, they fell for want of faith, and became the synagogue of Satan, to worship the diuell; then we must take heed we be not proud, because we haue the word and Sacraments, and seeme to be the people of God: but suspect our selues, take heed we maintaine faith in a good conscience, and shew it in repentance and obedience, lest we be cut off as they were.

Fear none of those things which thou must suffer. In this tenth *vers. 10.* verse is another part of the proposition. But seeing Christ comforteth the Church of Smyrna, and giueth her counsell, and rebuketh her not, as the Church of Ephesus, hence some gather, that a man may fulfill the whole law, and liue without sinne: but they be deceived: for Christ abstaineth here to rebuke the church, not because there was no iust cause of reprehension in her: but because he saw that the Church did truly beleene and repent, and decayed not in loue, as the church of Ephesus had done. Secondly, he doth it, because God accepteth of the will and indeuour of them which beleene and repent, as of the

deed: he taketh their labor and induour to obey him, as perfect obedience at their hands. And for these two causes, Christ he commendeth and comforteth her, giueth her counsell, and rebuketh her not; not that she wanted iust cause of rebuke.

Seeing that this Church was so accepted of Christ, that he would not rebuke her, but commendeth and counselleth her, we see it is good and necessarie for Gods Church to be in affliction sometime: for this church of Smyrna was in affliction, and so was kept from many sinnes, which otherwise she would haue fallen into. So for all other churches and children of God, it is necessarie to be in affliction sometimes.

But feare not. Here is Christs counsell, which hath three parts: first, a precept: Feare not, &c. secondly, a Prophecie, *Behold:* thirdly, a precept againe: *Be thou faithfull.* The first precept is: *Feare not.* This commaundement may seeme to be contrarie to other places of Scripture, as when he biddeth vs worke out our saluation with feare & trembling; & where *Paul* biddeth vs not be high minded, but feare. *Answe.* There be three kinds of feare: the first, naturall: the second, of grace: the third, of vnbeleefe. The first, which is in all men by nature, is a declining or auoiding of death: seeing al things by nature seek to preserue themselves: and this naturall feare was in Christ, who feared death, as it was the separation of the soule and bodie, though it was no sinne in him, but an infirmitie. Secondly, feare is from grace. *Mal. 1.* saith the Lord: *If I be your Father, where is my feare?* Which is a reuerence to God in regard of his mercie and iudgment; and this is no sinne but a vertue. The third, is from vnbeleefe, when men for feare of persecution or other hurt, forsake God and his religion; more fearing the persons of men, then the maiestie of God. Now Christ speaketh not of the two first, but of the last only: namely, a distrustful feare, when for feare of persecution or affliction, we forsake God and religion; that feare which draweth men from God to death and damnation, if they repent not. *Feare not.* Here Christ sheweth the sinne of euery man by nature: namely, to feare man more then God, to be more affraid of the face and countenance of men, then of the power and might of the euerliuing God: which is not onely in sinners,

sinners, but in the regenerate in some part, who do not consider of God as he is indeed, a mightie Iudge taking vengeance on sinners.

In this Christ sheweth the means to arme our selues against all such feare of perils, persecution, or daunger: namely, Christian fortitude and courage: which is a gift of God proceeding from true faith, whereby we are made able to lay aside all feare of daunger, and to vndergo all persecutions, afflictions and dangers for the maintaining of faith and a good conscience. This Christ often prescribeth, and arineth his children with this christian fortitude, as the Prophets and Apostles in the old and new Testament, and now every child of God and every Church. And it were to be wished, that Ministers now in our daies could say to all Gods children, *Feare not*: but alas now they must change their voice, and crie with the Prophet, *Howle and lament in sackcloth and ashes, for your destruction is at hand*. And surely there is cause why, if one looke and view the bodie of our people: as *Osea* saith, there is no knowledge of God in the land, euery man seeketh to follow his owne waies, none cleaueth to the Lord, seeketh to know and obey him. Besides, they are altogether carnall, fleshly, dead and drowned with the cares of this life, none affecting things belonging to eternall life: but all mens hearts are possessed with pleasures, profits and preferments of this world. Nay all men in generall lye in a dead sleep, there is no sense or feeling in them: a spirituall slumber hath wrapped all mens hearts in securitie and ignorance, neuer thinking or considering of the iudgement to come, neuer dreaming of the euill day, though God preach daily by his iudgement to them. Again, the contempt of the word and Gospell, the prophanation of the Sabbath, want of mercie and loue, the cruelty which aboundeth in all men, oppression, whoredomes, fornications, these be the sinnes of the people now in our daies rise in every place; these are common sinnes, calling for vengeance, which will come vndoubtedly, vnlesse we repent: so that Christ cannot speake to vs, as to this Church, but in a contrarie voice, But though this be the common estate of most men, yet Christ he hath a remnant, who lament and moune for the sins of the

land, who are grieved with the abominations of the world: and these need not feare, but they must take to them Christian fortitude & courage, lay aside al feare of danger, & of al that man can do, and boldly vndergo all crosses and afflictions, euen to death, to maintaine faith and a good conscience to the end. That they may do this, let them first consider, that they which feare distrustfully, must haue a miserable portion, in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. *Rev. 21. 8.* therefore for feare of this reward, let vs go on fearing nothing.

2 They must consider Gods presence: he is by them, readie to protect and defend them, his Angels pitch their tents about them, *Psalm. 34. 12. 2. King. 6. Elshabs* seruant seeing in Dothan an huge armie, which beset him and his maister, he saith, Be not affraid, for they which be with vs, be more then these against vs. He was fully perswaded of Gods presence and protection, and that Gods Angels would defend and guard him: so should al men in danger, they must beleue and perswade themselves God is present, he hath his Angels pitching their tents to defend and protect his children.

3 Gods children must consider in perill, that it is an honorable thing to suffer for Christs sake, and it is a happie thing to suffer for the Gospell of Christ. *Paul* he accounted it his chiefe honour, nay he reioyced in nothing so much as in his sufferings for Christs sake. Then if suffering the crosse for Christs sake be such an honourable thing, we must lay aside all feare, and by Gods grace arme our selues with Christian fortitude and courage, to vndergo all crosses & afflictions whatsoeuer. But those which are not touched with the present day of miserie, nor haue not this perfect fortitude, they must lament and howle, lest the euill day take them vnprovided.

The next part of Christs counsell is, a prediction or prophetic of the afflictions which this Church must suffer. But before he propoundeth the afflictions, he setteth a word of attention: *Behold.* By which he teacheth them, and in them, vs: that it is our dutie often to thinke and consider of the time of affliction before hand, to meditate of Gods iudgements and corrections before they come, lest we perish in them. For Christ (*Luk. 19.*) he

he came to Ierusalem, and wept ouer it, and foretold the iudgements to come: and the cause was, because *she knew not the day of her visitation*: because she would not think of her iudgement and affliction to come, therefore Christ foretels and shewes her final destruction. Let vs take heed, lest it fall out with vs as it did with them.

It shall come to passe. By this Christ shewes he is true God. For he which can foretell all future things in particular, though they be contingent, he is God, for that is proper to God: but Christ foretels their particular affliction to come, *ergo* he is God.

Ob. But the Phisitian can foretell the death of his patient, the Astronomer the eclipse of the Moone to come, *Ans.* They do so, but by meanes: the Phisitian foretels by the causes and signes he seeth in the partie, by which death is in a sort present: so the Astronomer by the naturall course of the heauens, can foretel an eclipse by the courses and signes of it, in which the eclipse is present: but without these signes and causes they cannot simply: but Christ without any signe or cause simply foretels this affliction in particular, to come to the Church of Smyrna.

Christ describes the affliction, first by the cause, namely the *diuel*: secondly, the persons, *some of you*: thirdly, the kind, *imprisonment*: fourthly, the end, *so trie you*: fifthly, the time, *ten dayes*. For the first, the cause, it is the diuel. *Ob.* But how can he afflict them, seeing he is a spirit and dealeth not with the bodie of men? *Ans.* He is indeed a spirit, and ruleth in the aire, he is the god of this world, he ruleth in the hearts of wicked men, he ruleth, guideth, and gouerneth in them, directs their thoughts, wils, affections, so as he stirres them vp, moues and caries them to persecute the children of God, to cast them in prison. Now in that the diuell is the author of persecution, we see of what spirit those be which persecute the Church, namely, men inspired by the diuel, moued and ruled by him, notorious wicked wretches, which haue Satan for their king and ruler. For this cause *Paul* saith, he was the chiefe *1.Tim.2.* of sinners, seeing he was caried by him to persecute the church of God. Let then all men take heed of this: for he which persecutes the Church for religion, in word or action, he in that action is the vassall of Satan, sed and ruled by the diuell: and the diuell in

that action vscth him as his instrument : Satan is the chiefe and principall agent, he is his slaue to do his will, and is as a souldier vnder his band. Againe, learne we to take pitie on all such persons, seeing they be possessed by the diuell, led and moued by him, yea euen to pray for our persecutors. Furthermore, the weapons we must haue to defend our selues in persecution, are not temporall but spirituall: seeing our enemy is a spirit, we must vse inuocation and praier, fasting and humbling our selues, by which we shew our faith, repentance and obedience to God. By this weapon of prayer, *Elias* is called the chariot and horsemen of Israel: this is a most excellent weapon. And if the Lord should send a forreine enemy among vs, then is indeed the souldier to be vsed, but our principall weapon must be prayer, that must be our chariot and horsemen: the diuell feareth not the sword or gun, but this spirituall weapon will ouerthrow him. I proceed to the second point, their affliction is described by the persons, *some of you*, not all, but some of them: thirdly, by the kind of affliction, imprisonment, he shall not kill or destroy you, but imprison you: and some of you, not all of you. Fourthly, the end, to trie you, that your hope, faith, patience, and other graces, may be made knowne to your selues and other.

In all these we note, that Gods prouidence is the first and generall cause aboue all causes, ouerruling, ordering, and disposing them. In this prouidence he vscth two instruments, good, as good Angels and regenerate men; and he workes in and by these in all things; and in these there is a good order, no disorder. The second kind of instruments be bad, as wicked Angels, diuels and wicked men, which though they be wicked in themselves, yet God can vse them well: and in these is nothing but disorder, and the Lord, he worketh by them but not in them, and permits their disorder and sinnes, to shew by them his iustice and power. These wicked instruments (in themselves) the Lord vscth well and to good ends: for his prouidence is aboue them, it restraines them, keepes in their malice, bridles them that they cannot shew their malice to the ful, but be bridled and kept short, being ouermastred by his prouidence. So here the diuel he afflicteth them, yet not all, but some of them, and he destroyeth not, but onely imprisoneth

prisoneth them; and not alwayes, but for a short time.

The second action of Gods providence, vsing wicked instruments, is, that the Lord turneth all to the good of his children. The diuell in afflicting them purposeth their destruction, but the Lord turneth it to their good, to proue them, and trie the vertues and graces of their hearts, as their faith, hope, loue, patience, &c. so that the Lord doth not onely reſtraine their malice, but turneth all things to the good of his people. Now we should often thinke of this providence of God, and for euer bleſſe his name for the ſame, ſeeing he ouerrules the wicked instruments, he reſtraines their malice, he vſeth them for the good of his children: and conſidering of this, it ſhould make vs to renounce our ſelues, to commit our ſelues to his protection, make his providence our ſure defence and ſafeguard in all our temptations. vſe. 1.

And ſeeing the end of their affliction is to trie them, we muſt al firſt labour to haue the power of godlineſſe, not onely in outward ſhew and formall profeſſion, but to feele the power of it truly in our hearts: for the Lord wil trie vs as gold in the fire, the Lord will caſt vs into the fire of affliction, to proue vs whether we be pure gold, whether we haue pure faith, vnſained repentance, and a good conſcience or not: theſe wil abide the fire and not burne, when formal ſhew of godlineſſe will. vſe. 2.

2. Seeing afflictions are to trie vs, we muſt reioyce, and thinke tribulation a great bleſſing. *Iam. 1. Thinke it exceeding ioy to fall into temptations:* for by affliction our graces are made manifeſt to our ſelues and to the world. The fifth circumſtance is the time, for ten daies. Some vnderſtand by this a long time, as *Gen. 31. 41* *Laban changed Jacobs wages ten times,* that is, many times: but it is not ſo here, for Chriſt ſpeakes that to comfort them: now what comfort were this, to be long in affliction? Others thinke that by ten daies, ten yeares is meant, and that becauſe it is often in ſcripture ſo vſed, ſeeing there is a weeke of yeares as well as of daies: but that cannot be proued, that they were in perſecution ſo long and no longer. Then, I take it, by ten daies is meant a very ſhort time, a litle ſpace of time, and this is moſt ſutable to all the circumſtances of the text, and the purpoſe of Chriſt, which was to comfort the Church: as if he had ſaid, Thinke not thy af-

affliction to be long, for it is but for ten daies, a short time.

In which words note two things : first, that the afflictions of Gods Church are for a certaine time ; a time decreed and set downe by God, that cannot be shortned or made longer. So the Lord told *Abraham*, that the Israelites should be in captiuitie and affliction 430. yeares, and so it came to passe, for they were in affliction, especially in the land of Egypt 430. yeares: but so soone as that time was expired, the same night were they deliuered. So *Daniel* for the space of threescore and ten yeares captiuitie, prayed not to the Lord for deliuerance, for he knew the time was certaine and could not be changed, and therefore was patient : but when that time drew to an end, then he prayed for deliuerance, and the Lord heard his prayer. This should teach vs in affliction to be patient, and to seeke to arme our selues with patience: seeing the time of our affliction is certain, and cannot be made shorter or longer, we cannot be deliuered till the whole time be expired. Secondly, note that the afflictions of Gods Church and children be but for ten dayes, a very short space of time, in respect of eternall life: and this is a notable comfort to any in the crosse and persecution, seeing the Lord wil put an end to it, it shalbe but for ten dayes, a short time, as *Paul* teacheth, 2. *Cor.* 4. 17. But yet there is more to be noted in these words, euery word containing an argument of comfort for the Church: for first the author of afflictions is the *diuell*, he causeth them : now feare not him, for he is Gods enemy, therefore thou being his enemy, hast God for thy friend, and then what can he do to thee to hurt thee : for they which haue him their enemy, their cause is good.

Secondly, he shall not afflict all the whole Church, but *some of you*, a few of them : the Lord restraines his malice, he cannot do his wil. Thirdly, he cannot kill or destroy them, but onely afflict their bodies. Fourthly, he shall not do that to their destruction, as he would, but the Lord turnes it to try them for their good. So this affliction it shall not last alwaies, but for ten daies, a very short time, why then should you feare? Let not feare overcome your hearts, be not discouraged, but take Christs fortitude and courage, lay aside all feare, and vndergo manfully al danger,

to keepe faith and a good conscience to the end.

The third part of Christs counsell is another precept, which containeth a most blessed and heauenly counsell: *be thou faithfull.*

The children of God ought to be faithfull, in regard of God, and that fidelitie they owe to him, first, by promise made to him in baptisme; for in that Sacrament God promiseth to his child, Christ with all his benefites, and the child of God promiseth and maketh this stipulation to God, that he will renounce himselfe, and in death and life rely onely on Christ. Now when a man keepeth this promise made in baptisme, and performeth this condition to God and stipulation, then he is faithfull to God; & when he breaketh it, then he is vnfaithfull, 1. *Pet.* 3. 21. Secondly, the Lord he giueth his seruants many graces, as faith, hope, loue, repentance, &c. these he committeth to man, to see how he will vse or abuse them. 1. *Tim.* 6. 20. we must labour to keepe them, to vse them well: and this if we do to Gods glorie and to our owne good, then we be faithfull to God, else not: as if a man commit a thing to be kept by another, if he loose it, or keepe it not well, he is not faithfull to him.

Be faithfull. As if he had said: Thou hast made a promise in baptisme, to keepe faith and a good conscience: and thou hast had many graces, promising to vse them well, to keepe them in life and death, & be faithfull in persecutions & afflictions: keepe faith and a good conscience, and then thou art faithfull. Against this dutie three sorts of men offend: first, they which though they haue made a covenant in baptisme to serue the Lord, to keep faith and a good conscience, yet liue in ignorance and securitie, neuer seeking to know the Lord, to vnderstand his will, or to obey him: yet these will brag of their good meanings, though they haue no care at all to please God, no care to keepe their covenant made with God, and their stipulation in baptisme to him. Secondly, they which for a good while haue had faith and a good conscience, and haue come to serue the Lord, yet after long time fall away, being entangled with the world, with the profits and sinnes thereof, and so leaue all and come to breake faith and a good conscience: both these

are vnfaithfull seruants, and their reward (if the Lord dealt in iustice with them) is destruction: and yet all men in a maner be of these two sorts, they either liue in ignorance, or fall away after a long time. The third sort are they which profess a long time, liue in faith and good conscience, and be earnest professors, yet in time of triall and persecution, they will leaue all profession of religion to saue themselues. Then seeing all these offend, we must labour to know God, to obey him, to keepe his graces bestowed on vs to the end, to liue and die in his seruice, and to lose our life rather then any one grace which God bestoweth vpon vs.

And I wil giue thee the crowne of life. Here is a reason to moue thee to go on in persecutio, to be faithful to the end. Hence the Papists gather, that a man may merit heauen, seeing there is promised a crowne of life. *Ans.* It is called a crowne of life by resemblance: for as men in a race, first run, and after they obtaine the crowne at the end of their race; so men must first in this world liue godly, run and finish their course, after that, they haue their crowne in heauen. I answer againe; this reward is not of the worke, but the promise is made to the workers, not to the martyredome, but to the martyr, which hath by suffering death shewed his faith in Christ: it is not made to the passion or suffering, but to the person suffering, & not for his suffering, but to him as he is in Christ, & declared to be so by his suffering death. So then, that promise is not made to the work, but to the worker, and not for his work, but for the worthinesse of Christ, in whom he is a true member of the Church.

vj. The vse then is, that if we keepe this promise in Baptisme, made before God, his Angels, and the Church, we shall haue the reward of all, which is the crowne of life in the kingdome of heauen, promised to such as be faithfull to the end.

Verse 11. *Let him which hath an eare, heare.* In these words are the conclusion, or last part of the Epistle. Now in these three verses for the most part is a rehearfall of those things which Christ deliuered before, in this and in the former Chapter.

Now seeing Christ the head and Doctour of his Church is most perfect in his doctrines, both for matter and maner of deliuering:

liuering the same, seeing he repeateth againe and againe the same things, and seeing *Peter* put them often in mind of their common saluation, hence we note, that Ministers may often repeat the same doctrine: not onely the same matter, but in the same maner and words. So did Christ the head Doctor of the Church, so may we or any preacher preach the same sermon againe in maner and matter, not for to ease our selues, but for the good and benefite of the Church: as Christ seuen times repeateth the same doctrine to the good of the Church, and common benefite of all. The hearers then if they find the Preacher shall deliuer the same doctrine againe, or often, they must not find fault, for then they might as well find fault with Christ himselfe, who not once or twise, but often repeated the same words.

In this eleuenth verse is a conclusion of the Epistle to the Church of Smyrna, and it hath two parts: first, a commaundement: secondly, a promise. In the commaundement, first what is commaunded, secondly, to who. The duty commaunded, is to heare. There are two kinds of hearing. good, and bad. Here he requirerth good hearing, with faith and obedience, not naked and bare outward hearing. Then we see the true knowledge of the Gospell standeth in hearing with faith and obedience: for we know no more then we belecue and obey: if we belecue and obey nothing, we heare and know nothing with sound hearing to saluation. The second thing is, to whom the commaundement is giuen, to them *which haue eares to heare*: for some are deafe, some be liuely and hearing hearers. They are deafe, which heare onely with outward and bodily eares, not affected in hart, nor chaunged in life by the word: they are good hearing hearers, which are touched and affected by the word, changed and renewed in life by the same, hauing not onely outward eares of the head, but inward, bored by Gods spirit in the heart.

Hence we learne two things: first, that election is not general and vniuersall of euery particular man: for there is, was, and shall be euer some deafe hearers. Secondly, we learne our duty, that we must not onely heare the word, and lend our outward eares, but withall ioyne faith, obedience, and conuersion in life, so heare that we be changed in life, and turned to God, else our

hearing is fruitlesse, nay to damnation. The third thing is, what they must heare: *What the Spirit saith*: namely, that which is before in the former words deliuered by Christ. The principall things be these: first, that the Lord seeth and regardeth the tribulations and afflictions of his Church: secondly, that Gods Church and people being to suffer the crosse and afflictions, must forethinke of it, and consider of it before it come; & withall must arme themselves with Christian courage and fortitude, not to feare too much. Thirdly, they must be faithfull to God in regard of their promise and covenant in baptisme, in keeping faith and good conscience, and in defence of true religion euen to death. So that they must heare these three: the first, concerning Gods providence, seeing and regarding his church: the second, concerning Christian fortitude, & courage in afflictions: the third, our faithfulness & constancy in defence of faith & a good conscience, maintaining of true religion to the end. These three are the things they should heare and consider: and so we must consider and learne the same. To excite them and vs to these three things, to heare and know the three duties, he giueth two reasons: first, because the Spirit speaketh: the second is, the persons to whom he spake, not to one, but all Churches, directly to them of Smyrna, and in them to all churches, to all of vs, no man is excepted but must heare him.

The second part of the conclusion is a promise: *He which ouercometh shall not be hurt*. That we may ouercome, two things are required: first, to renounce and go out of our selues: secondly, to cast all our hope, trust and affiance in Christ: which when we do, then we haue sauing faith, and this ouercometh all our enemies. The second thing is, to keep faith and a good conscience, to defend true religion, to the end of our dayes, against all enemies.

And shall not be hurt of the second death: that is, eternall death: for the first death is, when the bodie and soule are separated in this life: the second, when both bodie and soule are separated from God for euer. In which separation (*Reu. 21.*) consisteth the destruction of a man, euen the suffering of the fire of the eternall

ternall lake. It is then as if he said: though he shall suffer the first death, yet he shall not be hurt of the second, he shall escape that fire and lake for euer. This is a most comfortable and happie promise to escape the lake of hell. Here note, first to whom this promise is made, *to them which overcome*, to them which renounce themselves, put their trust and affiance onely in Christ, and labour to keep faith & a good conscience to the end. Then if we would overcome, it is not enough to know, to teach, or heare of religion: but true profession is ioyned with fighting against all the enemies of the same with christian courage, let none of them raigne ouer vs, but fight till we overcome and get victorie ouer them all, then we overcome indeed, and then to vs is made this promise. Alas it is nothing to know or approue religion, and yet to liue in sinne, and to let the diuell, the world, and our flesh raigne ouer vs. Then we must neuer content our selues with bare profession, but labour to say in our hearts, that we are conquerors of hell, death, &c. by grace of Christ in vs; and then we haue a blessed promise of freedome from the second death, and of eternall happinesse: we shall not feare the fire of hell, the burning lake. Furthermore, in these words is answered a question, which many a mans heart maketh, but few in the truth of heart can answer. How may I escape the burning lake, how can I flie and auoid the second death? *Ans.* Thou must in this life turne truly to God, from all thy euill waies, renounce thy selfe, beleue and put thine assurance in Christ, and withall endeouour to keep faith and a good conscience to the end; and then thou shalt escape the second death, the fiery lake of hel shall not hurt thee; though thou shalt tast of the first, yet thou shalt not see the second death.

Would any haue his soule escape this burning lake, haue his silly soule free from the torments of hell? let him turne to God, renounce himselfe, put his trust and confidence in Christ, neuer turne to his former sinnes, and withall take heed to maintaine and keepe faith, a good conscience, and maintaine pure and true religion to the end, and then he shall be free from the burning lake.

Further, we see by these words, that of the two deaths, the se-

cond is the worse, and most properly death: for the first is but a preparation to the second: the second is the cruell death and destruction of body and soule. This is yet the madnes of men, that they feare the pangs of the first and not of the second, neuer thinke of the burning lake: like children, which feare shadowes, and neuer feare fire or water, but suffer themselves to be drowned or burned.

Verse 12.

And to the Angell which is at Pergamus. In these words is the third particular commaundement of Christ to *Iohn*, for the penning and publishing of this third Epistle to the Church of Pergamus. By the Angell of this Church, is meant either the Minister and Pastor, or company of the Ministers & governors of the same. So often in the word, one is put for a multitude. This particular commaundement is giuen to *Iohn* by Christ, to assure him of his calling to pen this booke and Epistle: secondly, to assure the Church of the authoritie of the booke, seeing it is deliuered by Christ himselfe.

The Epistle hath three parts: first, a preface: secondly, a proposition: thirdly, a conclusion. The Preface in these words, *Thou saith he with hath that sharp, &c.* the proposition in the thirteenth verse, the conclusion in the seuenteenth verse.

Thou saith he. Here he sheweth in whose name he wrote this Epistle, to wit, Christs: who is described, that he is not onely a Prophet and Priest, but a King, in gouerning and guiding his Church, for he hath a sword in his hand, which is described, first that it hath to edges. Secondly, it is sharpe, meaning by it the word of God, so as not onely the doctrine of the law, but the promises of the Gospell are of the like power. *Hebr. 4. 12.*

Christ is thus set out to comfort the Church of Pergamus, for by this Christ signifies three things: first, that he by power of the word killeth sinne, wounds it at the heart, he killeth and slayeth the corruption of our nature so deadly that it cannot recover againe: secondly, that he will strengthen and maintaine the church and the members of the same by this sword, against al their enemies, for he will not onely hurt the enemies, but defend his by his sword.

Obiect. How doth he wouud them by the word? *Ansiv.* The word

word must be knowne and beleueed of vs. Now when we know and beleuee the law, and the threatens thereof, and the points and promises of the Gospell : then if afflictions come, faith by which we beleuee them, maketh vs that we are comforted, and armeth vs against all afflictions and persecutions, so that nothing can hurt vs : but if we beleuee it not, then the word is to vs as a sword in a sheath, not drawn out, nor vsed to defend or driue backe our enemies; but being beleueed, it is powerfull, no might of man or any Prince is comparable. Thirdly, Christ destroyeth and killeth all our enemies, all the aduersaries of the Church, & this is the principal end of this sword: for Christ speaketh these words to comfort his Church in persecutions, and for this he is said to haue a sharpe two edged sword, for he killeth and slayeth the enemies of his Church, partly in this life, but deadly in the life to come. In this life, the word serueth to conuince them of hypocrisie, vnbeleefe, heresies, & superstition; for Christ he abolished them with the breath of his mouth, that is, this sword, 2. *Thess.* 2. Secondly, when they be touched by the preaching of this word with desperations; for when the law and Gospell is preached to them, it wounds them to the heart, by reuealing all their cursed dealings, their vnbeleefe and hypocrisie, and sets the conscience on the racke, and stirres it vp, which is fit of it selfe to accuse them when it hath reuealed their sinnes: then it finites them with feare and horror, and makes their conscience more fit to accuse & terrifie them; and then though they run on in sin, yet they haue a deadly wound of desperation, and this increaseth in this life and slayeth in the next, for it cleane cuts them off, when Christ shall say, Go yee cursed: this smiteth them starke dead, casting them into eternall destruction for euer.

We must labour to haue the word of God worke powerfully *Ps. 1.* in vs. to take place in our hearts by faith, not onely to shew our sins, & Gods wrath against the same, but withal to wound them, slay and kill them, and at the first to wound deadly: for onely to haue our sins detected, and our consciences terrified, this is the way to desperation, and the first wound to death, but we must go further, haue our corrupt hearts ript vp, wounded, crucified,

haue them reformed, and this is the way to wound our soules; and the end why Christ hath the two edged sword.

The second part is the proposition, containing two parts: first a commendation: secondly, a rebuke. The commendation in the thirteenth verse: *I know thy workes*. In these words he commends this Church, first in generall, secondly in particular: generally in these words, *I know thy workes*: that is, thy waies and doings, thy counsels, affaires, and withall I approue them, as Psal. 1. 6. *The Lord knoweth the righteous*, that is, he approves them.

I know thy workes. Christ he begins with these words in this and euery of these Epistles, to teach vs one especiall thing; that the feare of God is the chiefe thing to be learned, the beginning of all religion; and for this cause he beginneth thus, *I know thy workes*, three or foure times.

I know: shewing by this, that wheresoeuer we be, we are in the presence of Christ, he sees all our works, he heareth and knoweth all we do, we cannot go out of his presence: and to settle this deeply in our hearts, that he is present alwaies, seeing and beholding vs, he repeates this seuen times, in the beginning of euery Epistle. Then this should teach vs both Minister and people, to labour to haue this perswasion in our hearts, that Christ is present, seeth and beholdeth all we do, when we take any thing in hand, he stands at our elbowes, looketh on vs whether we do well or ill: then we must labour to haue this perswasion in our hearts, that we can say, now I do this or that, my Sauour Iesus Christ, my Lord and redeemer, he beholds me, lookes on me, seeth all my dealings, therefore I will behaue my selfe well. And the Preacher may spend himselfe in speaking, and to no purpose, till God giue grace, to teach the people this one point, which is the beginning and ground of all religion and feare of God: for men may haue knowledge, and speake much of the words of religion, yet they cannot be true Christians, till they haue learned this one point, to be so perswaded as they can say in their heart, Christ seeth and beholds me: and till we can do that, we shall make conscience of no sinne.

2 The particular, first commendation, *And where thou dwellest*: though thou dwel in a place where the diuel hath set his throne,

a place most incommodious and vnfit, yet thou obseruest and keepest my name and religion: thus he commendeth her for her constancie in religion.

Throne. That is, any place where superstition, idolatrie and wickednesse is practised without controlment, and frō whence wickednesse is conueyed to other places: for the diuell is the god of this world. 2. Cor. 4. 4. and he hath his kingdome, throne and seate placed, where he can practise sinne and wickednesse, where iniquitie is maintained, the Gospell despised, and from whence he conueyeth his diuellish wickednesse to other places. Such a place was *Pergamus*, a citie wherein sinne did abound without controlment, religion despised, and from whence wickednesse was conueyed to many other cities, townes, and places. Here we may note the diuels pollicie, who hath his kingdome here on earth like to God; here he placeth his thrones as a Prince, and maketh choice to haue the fittest place where he may rule and raigne, and practise wickednesse without controlment, & frō whence he may conuey it to other places; he hath euer had, hath now, & will haue his thrones. He had in old time the high places, the groues, and such places where the people committed idolatrie. Among the Gentiles there were Oracles to erect his thrones: for in them he gaue answers, and so conueyed his wickednesse to many. In later dayes he had euery church and chappell his throne, when Images, Saints, Roodes, and such like were erected, to which all men from all parts of the land came to worship. In schooles of learning he had his thrones, when nothing was taught but superstition and errors. And now in our times he hath his thrones, and officers to attend on the same, as wisemen, and these are a speciall meanes to erect his throne: for vnto these come men from farre and neare, so that he conueyeth his iniquitie to many, seeing many seeke to them, and so do him homage. So dicing and brothell houses, seeing in them iniquitie is practised, in them is his throne. In families where they liue in ignorance, in sinne and wickednesse, in blaspheming and drunkennesse, or any one sinne, there is his throne: and so many thrones as families, where they liue by any vniust dealing.

v/z.

Then it is necessarie, seeing the diuell hath his throne, the Lord should haue his opposite to this: as, when men haue thrones of iustice both ciuill and ecclesiasticall: ciuill, to repress all iniustice and wickednesse, to punish vice, to reward vertue: and ecclesiasticall, to punish and reprehend those sinnes, which ciuill iustice cannot.

The diuell cunningly and polittickly chooseth Pergamus. not a base towne or village, but a huge citie, whence many kings proceeded, where there was a famous and great king, and where was much people. So he chose Babylon a citie of confusion and abomination. So he hath chosen Rome which is become of a famous Church, the throne of Satan. So Ierusalem the citie of God, the temple of God, first began to be a denne of theeues, and then the citie fell to wickednesse: so the diuell getteth Gods temple, and the holy citie to be his throne. And in our time he getteth the great cities, & shire townes for his throne: for in the is greater ignorance, and the Gospell more contemned, then in small villages, in which after litle preaching it is willingly embraced. Now the cause of this is, because the diuell laboureth especially to haue his throne where he may do the most harme, and conuey his doctrine to moe places, and liue without controlment.

v/z.

If this or any other shire towne, or any great citie liue in sin, in ignorance, and contemne the Gospell, take heed: for they shall become in time a denne of theeues, and a synagogue of Satan, he will haue his throne there. Now then it is. our dutie to labor against him, to haue his throne plucked downe, to haue him defaced and cast out, haue our bodies and soules subiect to Christ, renounce our selues, relye wholly on Christ, forsake our owne waies, neuer lend our eares to Satan, let him haue no footing in vs, neuer suffer him to come to haue his throne begunne, but still labour to haue it razed and turned vpside downe: and withall suffer Christ to rule, suffer him alone to possesse our hearts, that so the kingdome of Satan being overthrowne, the kingdome of Iesus Christ may be increased daily in vs. Whereas the Church of God is gathered out of that place, where the diuell hath his kingdome erected, we note, that the Church of God

God is a companie of men deriued and taken out of the Synagogue of Satan, the kingdome of the diuell, though it be a chosen people, yet it is picked out of the kingdome of the diuell, where he ruleth: *Col. 1. 12. 13.* for all men are by nature the vassals of Satan, and subiects in his kingdome.

Then no man must stand of his gentilitie, and of his nobility *Use 1.* and bloud: but all our true ioy must be in this, that we are the members of the true Church of God: for what will it auaille a man to haue a golden chaine on his necke, and haue his will and affections vnder the slauerie of the diuell: or to be the sonne of a Prince, and yet to be out of the true Church, and to be in the companie of the wicked, a slaue and vassall of the diuell? But our ioy must be in this, that we are members of the Church of God, and haue right to the kingdome of heauen.

Sundrie men thinke, a man may be saued by any religion, *Use 2.* and most of the common people thinke, that good meaning will saue them: but a man may professe any religion, and haue good meaning, and yet not know one step to the kingdome of heauen, but remaine the vassall and slaue of Satan. For a man may haue outward ciuill iustice, and ciuill pollicie, and meane well, yet be the seruant of the diuell.

We see the children of God gaine a priuiledge aboue all *Use 3.* others: for in affliction and persecution, though they be cast into dangers, yet they may assure themselves, seeing they be members of Gods church, they be freed from the kingdome of the diuell, and so from that place of darknesse.

Seeing the preaching of the word gained a Church in the *Use 4.* middle of the kingdome of the diuell, we see the word hath a diuine power: for there is no creature which hath greater power in earth then the diuell, (except good Angels) yet the preaching of the word draweth one out of the kingdom of the diuell, and gathereth a Church in the midst of his kingdome.

Seeing in Pergamus, where the throne of the diuell was, *Use 5.* Gods children were, we see that God will haue his seruants to dwell in the middle of the wicked, and mingled with the vassals of the diuell: yet so, as he doth this for good causes: first, that their faith, obedience, and repentance, might be exercised: se-

condly, that so they might be kept f^ro many grieuous sins, into which else they would fall. So when the Lord brought the Israelites into the land of Canaan, he would not cast all their enemies out at once; but they must be mingled, and dwell with the Canaanites: for if they should destroy them at once, the wild beasts might haue destroyed the land: so the Church must be mingled with euill men, that the godly may be exercised, and that they might be kept from more grieuous sinnes. Secondly, he will haue his children to dwell with wicked & vngodly men, that their godly life might shine as lights among them. *Philip.* 2. 17. and so to winne them to the Gospell: for a godly life is most effectuell to win men to Christ. Thirdly, that the Lord might shew speciall tokens of his loue and fauour to them, that when he bringeth his iudgements on the wicked, yet he defendeth them. *Ezech.* 9. 4. He marked them which mourned; that they might escape the iudgement which was brought on Ierusalem. Then if any man dwell among such as contemne and hate religion, and the doctrine of the Gospell, let them be contented, seeing it is Gods will they should dwell with the wicked, and the Lord will haue his Church on earth proued and exercised by them.

v^rg 6.

We see it is lawfull for men to dwell with and by such wicked men: but they must not communicate with them in their sinnes, but abstaine from their wickednesse: as *Lot* in Sodome, and *Noah* dwelt with the wicked men of the old world: and the church of Pergamus in the place where the diuels kingdom was erected. For (1. *Cor.* 7.) there is a question, whether a seruant hauing a maister which is an infidell, may forsake him or not: the answer is made: he must dwell with him; but so, that thereby he deny not the principall grounds of religion, but keepe a good conscience towards God in all things.

And hence we may see how to answer that old obiection of the Papists: Where was our Church fourscore yeares agoe, before *Luther* preached, when the doctrine of Antichrist was in all Europe? By the like I aske: Where was the Church of Pergamus, when the kingdome of the diuell was there? The holy Ghost telleth vs, that in the same time when the diuell had created

And his throne mightily in that place, yet there was the church of God. So when the man of sinne had spread his doctrine of wickednesse in all Europe, yet there was a Church amongst vs, in this and other lands: as appeares, in that euer there was some, which both openly and priuately oppugned his doctrine, by word and writing in all ages: which shews, that though sin ruled in this church many hundred yeares, yet the Lord had professors though not so visible as now it is, when men may professe openly in euery place without feare.

And kept my name. Though thou dwellest in a place where the diuel hath erected his throne, yet thou maintainest my name, and holdest it fast, so that neither fraud nor force of enemies can take it from thee.

My name: that is, my doctrine of the Gospell, *Rev. 9.* Thou doest constantly hold and maintaine it, and my religion: thou beleeuest the doctrine of saluation which my seruants haue deliuered to thee. So that in these words Christ commendeth the church of Pergamus for constancie in maintaining the doctrine of saluation.

We see it is not enough for vs, to hold, beleeue, and maintaine religion, but we must do it constantly, (so the word signifi-^{vs}) we must hold the same fast against all aduersaries, not easily turned with any blast of mens doctrine, but so to hold religion, that no enemy by force or fraud draw it from vs. When (*Mat. 13.*) the man found the pearle, he sold all to buy the field. And if a man amongst vs should find in our field, by his cunning and skil, a golden mine, he would not tel it to any, but go and sel all he had, & buy the ground, that so he might enrich himself. So we, if we know the doctrine of saluation, we must labor to make it ours, to haue it made sure to vs, to sell all we haue, to loose life it selfe rather then to forgo that precious pearle, *1. Tim. 3. 9.* Faith is compared to a precious iewell, which must be laid vp in the treasury of a good conscience, which cannot be broken into, but must be strong: in which store-house and treasury we must haue true religion and faith locked; that nothing get it from vs, but loose all we haue, euen our life before we part with it: for if that be sure, all is well; but if faith and religion be lost, all is gone; saluation is

lost, thy soule is perished.

Now for her further commendation, Christ sets out her constancie by two arguments: first, that she held religion without deniall: secondly, that she held it in the time of bloody persecution. 1. The Church of Pergamus neuer denied Religion, or reuolted from faith in Christ: she did not as many men, who hold, beleue and maintaine religion, yet in time of trial they will reuolt. In this we must imitate her, else we know not whether the Lord will giue vs grace to repent: if he should not, we perish. *Esa* sold his birth-right for a small thing, a few red pot-tage; but after he sought it with repentance and teares, & could not get it. We must then hold religion, and not in time of affliction and persecution reuolt and deny it, lest the Lord giue vs no grace to repent, which we know not whether he will or not.

And hast not denied my faith: that is, mine owne doctrine of the Gospell, and true Religion. Religion is called Christs: first, because Christ with the Father and holy Ghost is author of it, all Religion which is good being from aboue: secondly, because he reuealed it from the bosome of his Father: thirdly, because Christ is the matter of al religion; Christ is the whole subiect of religion in the old and new Testament, the end of the law, and the scope of the Gospell.

The second argument, whereby Christ sets out her constancie, is, that she held religion in the time of bloody persecutions: when she was thus persecuted, she was constant. When *Antiphas* was put to death. Who this *Antiphas* was, it is not certainly knowne by any history, yet it is thought he was Pastor and Minister of the Church of Pergamus, who opposed himself, and oppugned the doctrine and idolatry of the heathen in that citie. In these words are two points: first, he commends this martyr *Antiphas*: when he saith, *That my seruant, my faithfull seruant Antiphas*, he extols him to the Church of Pergamus. By this we see, that it is lawfull to honour and commend Martyrs which dy for Christs cause, and that in two things: first, in giuing them their due deserued honour and commendation, as Christ did to *Antiphas*: secondly, by careful imitation of their constan-

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cie and vertues, and conseruation of life: for this cause Christ commendeth this good Martyr, that the people of Pergamus might imitate him in his constancie, not to honour him (as the Papists do) with diuine honour and inuocation. Againe, he saith *That my faithfull Martyr*, not commending him for his death that he died, but for the cause: for not the death but the cause makes a Martyr, for a man may die for heresie and erroneous opinion, and yet he is no Martyr. But *Antiphus* he was a true Martyr, *ergo* Christ saith, *that my seruant*, say that my faithfull seruant *Antiphus*.

In the end of this verse, he setteth downe the authors of this death of *Antiphus*: *Some among you*: some of Pergamus were the cause of his Martyrdome, they were such in whom the diuell ruled and raigned; and this he repeates, to shew that they which haue condemned Christs religion, though they pretend good things, yet they be the slaues of the diuell, he rules and raignes in them, they be his holds and castles.

Obiect. But why did the diuell dwell in the citie of Pergamus, more then in any other? *Answer.* Because many in this citie were Gentiles, they hated and contēned the Gospel, & so became the holds of the diuell: we must then take heed we neuer contēne the same. For in a family where they liue in ignorance, in iniustice, fraud and wickednes, there the diuell ruleth, he hath his throne; that is, a stable for him to dwell in. Then masters of families, and parents which gouern families, must see they loue and embrace religion, and teach it to their family, else their houses be but the stables of Satan, his place to dwell in.

Ob. But whether might not *Antiphus* being Minister and Pastor of that Church haue fled? *Answer.* Persecution is double, either directed against the person of the Minister principally, or to the whole Church equally: if it be against his person he may flie safely, if he get oportunitie to preserue his life, and haue libertie of the Church to flie; but if it respect the whole Church, then vnlesse he haue libertie graunted by them, he must stay and take part with them in their persecution. Now of this sort was *Antiphus* persecution, seeing he was so called of God to suffer.

But I have a few things against thee. He commended her before; but here he rebukes her; and this reproofe is first generally pronounced, then in more particulars in generall he tels them, that they wanted zeale, *Thou bearest with them which, &c.*

But I have. These words he spake to the church of Ephesus before, and here repeates them againe, teaching the true members of the Church, to enter into their owne hearts, to search what is in them that Christ may haue against them, to cal themselves to a strait reckoning, to consider all the things they haue done from their beginning to their end, and al their life narrowly to examine themselves, to lay their sinnes before their eyes, without flattering or fauouring themselves, not after their owne mind to iudge of them, but to examine them by the rule of Gods word; and in all their life looke what things there be for which Christ wil come against them. For want of this, many men being in the church perish, neuer consider their former life, how they haue liued, and for what sins Christ wil come against them. If we would escape death by Christs heauy and strait sentence, and come to life, we must thus call our selues to a reckoning, and simply lay all our sinnes in word, thought and deed before our eyes, to thinke what we haue deserued, and to condemne our selues: then we shall preuent that iudgement of Christ, he shall not need to enter into sentence with vs, if we haue put all our sinnes in a booke and reckoned already for them. The practise of this duty, is the foundation of all religion, and the beginning of all grace in the heart: but the want of this is the ruine of mens soules, and the ready way to destroy them. And if this be wanting, the Minister may speake and preach to little purpose.

Because thou hast borne with them: that is, entertained them which are wicked. Here the fault is in more particular, namely, want of zeale: they suffered men which maintained damnable doctrine, and heretical opinions to be among them, and dwell among them, such as held the doctrine of *Balaam*: so we see, though they held religion, yet they did it coldly, not shewing their seruent zeale against such as maintained damnable doctrine. By this we see the Church may vse zeale in excommuni-

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cating and cutting off those which maintaine damnable and hereticall doctrine: they may after due admonition excommunicate them, and cut them off as pernicious members. 1. *Tim. 2. Alexander and Hyminæus* were excommunicated: & the church may follow *Pauls* example, to cut off such as hold heresies in the fundamentall points of religion. And seeing Christ was offended for this their forbearing of those wicked men, we see, we must not entertaine such as hold such errors and damnable doctrine: but haue indignation against them, hate their opinions, and detest them. The Church must be couragious to defend truth in religion, to stand against wicked heretikes, to excommunicate and thrust them out of the Church, if they remaine obstinate.

Vers. 14. Thou hast. That is, thou entertainest certaine wicked men, and euil persons, which maintaine and teach *Balaams* doctrine, the doctrine of the false Prophet. And as Christ reproveth them here, so he might as well say to vs in this Church, that he hath something against vs, for want of zeale and severity against sinne and sinners: for though our Church doth not hold and maintaine, but repell the false doctrine of the Church of Rome, of the Anabaptists, and the Familie of loue; yet Christ may truly say, he hath something against vs, for want of zeale against sinners and wicked men. For in our Church they abound, there is abundance of Atheists and wicked men in the midst of vs, which are partakers of the word & Sacraments, & al outward priuiledges of the Church: and these Atheists, though not in word, yet in life, deny God and religion: they know not God, cannot distinguish betweene true religion, and the heresies and damnable doctrine of the Papists: they thinke not reuerently of the word of God, nor of his Ministers and Ambassadors. Amongst vs there be abundance of Epicures, who giue themselves to all licentiousnesse, to eate, drinke, and sport themselves: these loue not the word, but being vnder the law of the land, they will heare sometimes, once a year receiue the Sacrament, and this is all. There are also vnmercifull and cruell men, oppressors, men which in their priuate callings vse all iniustice, deceit, fraud, wrong, oppression, with vsurie, and such horrible

finnes: these are suffered in the Church, and these be the wise men of the world, we count them as politicke and great men. Now the suffering of these men amongst vs, sheweth, that in our Church is great want of zeale, seruencie and seueritie, for which Christ will come against vs, as to the Church of Pergamus.

The reason followeth, and the confirmation of his rebuke, which is to moue the Church of Pergamus, to detest the doctrine of *Balaam* the false Prophet; and it is taken from the effects of *Balaam*, that he gaue wicked counsell to *Balaak*, to cast a blocke in the way of the children of Israel, to make them eate of things offered to idols, and commit fornication. It standeth in a comparison or similitude: As the false Prophet *Balaam* cast a stumbling blocke before the Israelites, to moue them to eate of things offered to Idols, and commit fornication: so there are some among the Church of Pergamus, which labour to moue men to the same sinnes.

The first part of the similitude is in the first part of this verse: as *Balaam* taught false doctrine, and gaue ill counsell to *Balaak*, &c. In which we must consider three things: first, what his false counsell was, and what an offence is: secondly, the casting of offence before the Israelites: thirdly, the meanes how. An offence properly is any thing, word, or deed, which is cast in a mans way to make him stumble or fall, or go out of his way, as a stone, or peece of wood, or such like thing: this is a scandall or stumbling blocke properly. Here it is taken (by comparison) for any thing which hindereth a man in the way to saluation, which hindereth or stoppeth him, maketh him fall, or go out of the way.

Offence is double, either giuen or taken. Offence giuen, is any word or deed, whereby a man is procured to sinne: offence taken, is when a man taketh occasion to sin, or to be offended by that which is done well of another. So when Christ did well, and preached the true doctrine of saluation, the Pharises were offended at his doctrine: he did well, they tooke occasion to be offended at his well doing. Now one giueth an offence, when he maketh one offended, and causeth him (as much as he can) to sinne. So *Peter* telleth Christ, that the things he spake of should not come to him: Christ biddeth him, come behind him

him Satan: where *Peter* gaue an offence to Christ, though Christ did not sinne; for Christ tooke not the occasion which *Peter* yet offered. As for the giuing of offence, it is to cause a man to sin, or fall away from God by any thing. The meanes are things either simply euill, or indifferent. By things in themselves euill, as those which are directly against the word of God. Those things euill in themselves, be either ill perswasions, or ill examples: for by these offences are often giuen: for euill perswasions and examples draw the better sort often to sin, and are very dangerous meanes to make men offend. Againe, offences be giuen by things indifferent, not euill in themselves, but when men vse them vnseasonably and vnfitly, out of time and place, and not before fit persons. So *Paul* saith, that if to eate should offend, he would neuer eate: 1. Cor. 9. So here *Balaam* giueth offence, they of Pergamus take it, to commit sinne, and to be stirred vp to fall from God.

The meanes by which *Balaam* cast these offences before the Israelites: namely, by prouoking them to eate of the meate offered to idols, and commit fornication, *Numb.* 25. When *Balaam* had vsed many waies to curse them, and could not preuaile, he vsed new meanes, which was, to send out most wicked and beautifull women, to inuite them to their idole banquets, and to fornication, and they condescended to them.

Hence we gather, this is the peculiar note of a false Prophet, *vs. 1.* to draw men to offence, to cast stumbling blockes before them in the way to saluation: for *Balaam* a false Prophet is noted by this: and as *Paul* saith, godlinesse and true religion is a great mysterie to saluation: so false teaching is a mysterie tending to the destruction of mens soules.

So that by this note, we may iudge of all religions, both of the Iew, and the Turke: but especially of the Papiſts, which most trouble vs in this Church: for all religions whose doctrine tendeth to stop or hinder men in the way to saluation, they be the doctrines of diuels. The Papiſts religion which our ancient folke call the old religion, is a doctrine tending to destroy men, to ouerturne the whole morall law of God, especially to maintaine adulterie and idolatrie. The first commandement is,

thou shalt haue the true God onely for thy God. But the Papists make moe then one, they make the creatures Gods, they inuocate Saints, which, what is it, but to make them Gods, to giue them his honour, seeing he alone is present euery where, & seeth the hart, and seeing they say they can merit, which none can do for mans sin, but onely God, no not Christ himself if he were not God? Nay, they make the wooden crosse (not Christ on the crosse) to be God, in that they call it their hope: and so the virgin *Mary*, calling her our Ladie, putting hope in her, and saying, she can commaund her Sonne in heauen, in the matter of saluation. The second Commaundement they in practise breake, in making images of God the Father, like an old man, the Sonne as he was on earth, and the holy Ghost in forme of a doue, & with religious worship, adore and worship Saints.

They erre against the third commaundement, teaching that a man may swear by Saints: and the fourth, in that they make festiual dayes of men and saints to be equal with the Sabbath of the Lord, and take away mens libertie of labouring six dayes, to worship their saints. As for the fift commaundement, in this they make subiects free from their lawfull loyalty to their lawfull Princes. In the sixt, they make and appoint places to which murderers may flie and be safe, and in keeping the word from lay men (as they call them) and so murder their soules. In the seventh, they maintaine stews and houses of professed adultery, and hold that the vnckle may marry his neece or his great neece. For the eight commaundement, they ouerthrow it, in that they make all things saleable, heauen, hell, purgatory and all, which is manifest robbery. They wrong the ninth commaundement, in that they falsly make mens writings the canon of Gods word, nay they maintaine lying, seeing that they hold, a man being asked of a thing he knowes (as when one hath confessed his sinnes another askes him, he may though he know the same, say he knoweth not) that is, they know not them, to tell them to you; but that is a slender excuse. For the tenth commaundement, they make concupiscence and lust to be no sin, and put out that commaundement. So that we see, this whole religion, which is called of old people, the old religion, is cleane new from the true religion,

gion; nay it is a doctrine of diuels; seeing it tends to leade men to destruction; and ouerturning of the whole law of God.

To come to our owne church; true it is, men slaunder our doctrine, saying it is scandalous three wayes: first, that we teach, God creates men to cast the greatest number of them into hel & destroy them. First we answer we hold, that though the scripture speakes not of any certaine number, yet the elect are said to be a small number. Secondly, the end why God created men, was not to destroy them, but to manifest his own glory in their due, iust, & deserued damnation & destructiō: not that he created men to this end, to cast them to hell, Secondly, they charge the doctrine of our church to be a blasphemous doctrine, seeing we hold that God decreed mans fall, and so do make him the author of sinne.

Ans. We say indeed, that God decreed mans fall, & permitted him to sin, yet teach we not, that he is the author of sin: for his wil is double, generall and particular: in his generall wil, he decreed to permit man to sin and fall, yet so, as in respect of God it was good, though in respect of man euill: for as he can draw out of darknesse light, so out of euill he can worke good to himselfe. Secondly, there is his speciall wil, by which he wils and delights onely in that which is good, and by this he hated mans fall. And euen as the Magistrate hates, & would not the death of the malefactor, yet he wils it, in that he executes the same: so the Lord he in his general wil willed the permitting of mans fall, not as it was euill, but as it turned to his glory and honour, and the good of the elect. Lastly, they charge our doctrine to be a doctrine of securitie and carnall carelesnesse, in that we teach, men may be certaine of their saluation, and to perseuere to the end: but seeing we withal teach a man must vse the meanes, daily pray, heare the word, receiue the sacraments, and performe all the duties of faith and religion to the end, we teach no doctrine of carnall securitie, but a doctrine of paine and trouble, which maketh men not carelesse, but careful to come to heare, to be certaine, and to perseuere; therefore they charge vs wrongfully in all these.

Seeing it is so great a sinne to giue offence, we must take especiall heed we giue no offence in our life, conuersation, word, or

deed, but so to cary our selues, that we liue vnspottedly: for if we giue offence, we are *Balaams* scholars, and tread in his path. Let vs then in our callings so cary our selues vprightly, that we giue no offence: for wo to them by whom offences come: nay it were better they had a mil-stone tied to them, and they cast into the sea: for that is to plunge our brothers soule, as much as in vs lieth, to the gulfe of hel. But we must rather labour to help him, to take from him al blocks of offence; which if men would do, then our Church should flourish: but the want of this, makes men bold to sin, and to run on by sinne into hell. And as none must giue offence, so we must take heed we take no offence, or be alured to sin by mens wicked either counsel or examples: nay we must cast off all things, which may any way hinder vs in the way to heauen: if our right eye or hand offend, or any thing which is most deare and neare vs, we must cut it off: if we do so, then Gods blessing is with vs. The Israelites in the borders of the Moabites, so long as they serued the Lord, all curses could not hurt them, but turned to their good: but after they tooke offence by the Moabitish women, to be inticed by them, then they came to eat with them at their idol-seasts, and commit fornication; and then the wrath of the Lord was vpon them. The like may be said of vs.

vs 4.

Seeing they vsed these meanes, when they could not preuaile by cursing, to send their fairest women to inuite them to their banquets, to incite them to commit fornication: we see that temptations drawn frō the right hand, from profit and pleasure, are most dangerous, and preuaile most with men, to bring them to sinne and to fall from God. As a man that cannot win a citie by force, yet by gold, by promises of profit or pleasure, getteth the gate open: so when the diuell cannot preuaile with bitter & sharp temptations, then he vseth those of the right hand, and ouerthroweth many. We must then take heed especially of these. For this cause *Iob* sacrificed daily for his children when they had bene feasting, lest they should then haue sinned.

Vers. 15. Euen so thou hast those which maintaine the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes.

In these words is the second part of the comparison, in which
two

two things: first, what the Nicolaitanes were: secondly, how Christ was affected toward them. First, what they were in the Church of Pergamus, is manifest in these words: *Euen so*, which is a word of resemblance and relation, that may thus be described. They were a sect of men in the Church of Pergamus, which maintained two damnable opinions according to the doctrine of *Balaam*: first, that it was lawful to eat meate offered to idols, euen in the idoll temples: secondly, that fornication was no sin, as we haue shewed before.

It may seeme strange, that in the dayes of the Apostles, so soone after Christ, there should be any such which held these damnable opinions: yet we see there were such notorious heretickes. Now that we fauour not their opinions, we must know the grounds of their errors. For the first error: that a man might eat meat offered to idols, euen in the very temples of idols, for is, they might vrge Christian libertie thus. Those things which be indifferent may be lawfully vsed: but to eat meate offered to idols, is a thing indifferent. *ergo. Ans.* If these meats be considered in themselves, they be indifferent, and may lawfully be vsed: nay after they be offered to idols, if they be sold in the market and bought, they may be eaten priuately, so that we wound not any weake Christian. But as they be prepared to be offered to idols, vsed in idol-temples for the honour of them, we may not vse them as prepared for the idol, vsed and offered in the temple, and had in honour of them. Now the Nicolaitans vsed them so, therefore vnlawfully. Secondly, they might and did alleage (being professors of Christ outwardly) other places of scripture, as that *Paul* saith, *An idoll is nothing. ergo* it is no sinne to eat that which is offered to them. *Ans.* An idol is nothing by nature, subsisting or being, nothing which hath any sparke of the God-head in it, but yet in mans braine it is something, seeing in mens minds and imaginations they repute it as a God. Thirdly, they might alleage *Naamans* exaple, *2. King. 5. 18.* who went into the temple of Rimmon and kneeled downe there. *Ans.* He kneeled not to the idol but to the King, who was there, & leaned on his hand, so that he bowed downe, not with any diuine worship to the idol, but with ciuil worship to the Kings Maiestie: and *Naa-*

man was in the temple; not to worship the idoll, but to make protestation that he would serue the God of Israel, and for that end caried as much earth as two mules could beare, to offer sacrifice to the Lord. And if the Nicolaitans had bene so in the idol temples, to protest that they would worship the true God, then they had not sinned. So if any come into a place, and be present where Masse is said, with protestation to serue the Lord, he then allowes not of the same, but rather condemnes them for it.

For the second opinion of these Nicolaitanes, that fornication was no sinne, they seemed so to proue it out of *Genes. 19. 18.* when the men of Sodom came to *Lot's* house, he offereth them his daughters: now he would not haue done it (say they) if it had bin a sin. *Ans.* *Lot* seemes to be faulty, and not to be excused in that, though he thought to escape the greater sin by the lesser; but we must not do euil that good may come thereof. Againe, they might vrge, that (*Hos. 1.*) the Lord commanded *Hosea* to take a wife and children of fornication. *Ans.* 1. Some say it was onely in vision, not in deed. 2. Some answer, that he did it in speech onely, as he was a Prophet, because he prophesied to the people, that he was as one that had such a wife and children, which both are safe answers, and allowed. Other, more likely, say, it was a thing not in vision and word only, but in deed and truth done. And surely seeing the Prophets name, the womans name, & her fathers name are set downe; it seemeth to be a thing done indeed. Neither doth a thing in speech so much affect the people, as a deed and fact done. And the best and most auncient interpreters, which were nearest the time of Christ, interpret it a thing done indeed. But you may say, this was against good manners, & contrary to Gods law, that the Prophet should take such a wife. *Ans.* No: seeing God is about his law, and can dispense with it: as when he bids *Abraham* kil his sonne, and he had not sinned if he had slaine him: so here *Hosea* he did not sinne, hauing a particular and speciall commaundement for the same. Neither did he this to commit fornication, but to make of an harlot an honest woman: and he is bidden to take the children of fornication, not that he should beget any in fornication, but take her children which she had borne in fornication. Againe, *Ab. 15.*

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The Apostle speaking of two things indifferent, ioyneth fornication to them. *Ans.* First, he doth so, because the Gentiles thought that it was no sinne, but indifferent: and they are there conioyned (though fornication be not a thing indifferent) because the Gentiles offended the Iewes by these three ioynly together.

Now followeth the affection of Christ: *which things I also hate*: that is, not their persons, but their errors. *Which thing I hate.* First, he teacheth vs to auoide and dislike the least honour or approbation which can be giuen to idols: for these Nicolaitanes did not honour idols, or offer to them, but came into their temples, and (inited by their friends) did eate of the meate offered to them: yet Christ hateth their dealing: shewing, he would haue vs to do the like. This also condemneth the practise of the Church of Rome, who say, they worship not idols, yet they kneele downe to the images of Christ, and Saints, adore them, light candles and tapers to them, offer to them, hang costly jewels about their neckes, cloth them with costly apparell, and so do indeed farre more then the Nicolaitanes did; therefore hath Christ cause to hate them much more. This also teacheth men which trauell, to take heed that they trauell not without any calling, to see newes, out of the limits of the Church, as to Spaine and Italie: for then they being out of the bounds of the true Church, offer themselves to occasions which may bring them to idolatrie, though they hate images: for being in idolatrous places, they must come into their temples, and do as their manner is, offer to idols, and kneele downe to them: which they cannot without some approbation, whereas they should hate the least approbation or liking of them. Then it is good for men which trauell, to trauell within the Church, and not out, but by some speciall calling and necessitie. Further, by this, Christ would haue vs to hate all familiar societie with idolaters. A man may I graunt liue with Idolaters in a ciuill course of peace: but not to haue a speciall kind of familiaritie and amitie with them. Now as Christ hated their idolatry, so did he their fornication, giuing vs example to hate fornication: first, because our bodies are not our owne: but the bodie of a faithfull man or woman is

the bodie of Christ, he hath bought it; therefore we must consecrate and dedicate them to honour him, not Satan his enemy.

2. Our bodie and soule is the member of Christ, at least by profession: then we must not take the member of Christ, and make it the member of an harlot.
3. Our bodie and soule is the house and temple of the holy Ghost, therefore we must keepe them faire, pure and cleane, fit to entertaine such a guest: but they which pollute themselves with fornication, make them sties and stables for the diuell.

Vase 6.

Repent quickly. Having laid downe the fault of the Church of Pergamus, and the errors of the Nicolaitanes, here he sheweth the remedie to escape, and after the remedie, addeth two reasons to moue the to practise the remedie: the first, concerning the whole Church of Pergamus: the second, the Nicolaitans. In the remedie: note, first what repentance is: secondly, why it is so often prescribed by Christ to his Church: thirdly, to whom. To repent properly is to change the mind from euill to good, from sinne to God; thus, when by Gods grace a man hath this purpose in his heart, not to sin as before, but in all things wholly to do the will of God for euer. But here repentance (as commonly in the Scripture) is taken more largely, for all the duties which go with, or are in repentance: as first, humiliation, confession of our sinnes, condemning our selues for them: secondly, inuocation for pardon of them: thirdly, reformation of life, when a man purposeth and indeuoreth in his life to do the will of God. But why doth Christ so often repeate and prescribe repentance to his Church? *Ans.* Not because it is a meanes to procure or demerit saluation and reconciliation with God: for onely the death and passion of Christ and his merits alone can do that: but he calleth them often to this dutie, because it is the most excellent fruite of faith. Repentance of it selfe procureth not Gods fauour, but it is a token of Gods fauour procured in Christ. Secondly, because it is a path way wherein all men must walke, which must haue pardon of their sinnes and life euerlasting. But to whom doth Christ prescribe repentance? *Ans.* First, to the whole church of Pergamus: secondly, to the Nicolaitanes. As for the Church of Pergamus, the Ministers and people thereof.

Christ

Christ before had commended them for worthie graces, & they had repentance before; yet Christ bids them repent still. Now in that he prescribeth repentance still to a repentant people, it sheweth vs, that the whole life of a Christian, is a continuall practise of repentance, a daily and perpetuall repentance. When one hath begunne and repented once, that is not enough; but as euery day addeth to our age, so euery day, for our new finnes, we must haue new repentance. *1. Cor. 5.* *Paul* desired them to labour to be reconciled to God. Now (*1. Cor. 6.*) they were reconciled already, and had true repentance: noting that they must labour to haue their reconciliation more increased, in regard of the certaintie of it, and their daily offences and finnes. Now we must thinke, that what Christ spake to the Church of Pergamus, is spoken to vs; and if we be in the like sin, we must learne to performe the same dutie, which they are commanded here. Christ moreouer prescribeth this not onely to the Church of Pergamus, but to the Nicolaitanes, which held two damnable errors; and as they held them, no doubt they liued accordingly, yet Christ biddeth them repent. Then great and grievous finnes are not barred from Gods mercie if they will repent. Excellent is that of *Esay*: Our God is much, exceeding much in mercie. *Psalme. 130.* God is much in mercie, plenteous in redemption, no man which is a grievous sinner, but God offereth him mercie, if he will repent and lay hold on it. Among vs in this Church are many ignorant and euill people: yet if these will repent, the Lord offereth his mercie; though they be as wicked as the Nicolaitanes, as *Iudas*, or *Herode* were, yet Christ offereth his mercie and merite, if they will lay hold on it. Then let all such wicked men breake off their sins by repentance, of their idolatrie, blasphemie, fornication, and humble themselves with *Iob* in dust and ashes, and they shall find mercie. But we must not abuse Gods mercie to presumption, but be sure, that though thy finnes be as scarlet or crimlon, or as scarlet which can take no other colour, yet there is mercie in store to helpe thee, if thou repent. This doctrine may be taught to malefactors, not to imbolden them in sinne, but to assure them, that if they repent at any time, the Lord will heare them: yea though

a man fall often into the same sinne (which is dangerous) yet if he haue grace to repent, Gods fountaine of mercie is not drawne dry, but still he hath in store; onely they must repent: for if they looke to haue the merit of Christ, Christ looketh to haue their repentance.

Verse 16. *Else I will come against thee shortly.* After the remedy follows a two-fold reason, to inforce and set an edge on the former doctrine: first, concerning the Church of Pergamus: secondly, concerning the Nicolaitanes, holding and practising of these two sinnes.

The first cause and reason, *If not, I will come, &c.* that is, if thou do not repent for these sinnes, want of zeale, and other thy particular sinnes, I will come to thee shortly, to punish and plague thee; for the Lord (as I haue said) he cometh either in mercy, or in iudgement. Now if they repent not, Christ saith he will come to them, not to help them, but to execute iudgement on them, to punish them. So *Esay. 30. 27.*

Christ saith not, *I will, but I come to thee:* expressing the time to come, by the time present: to certifie them, that if they repent not, he will most surely come, as certainly as if he did now come to them.

In this threatning we see a generall rule to be learned of all, that if any Church or people will not repent, then the Lord will come to them in iudgement to punish them, as by sundry examples we may see the Lord hath done. In our Church and people, though some do repent, yet for the comunion body of the people they do not, but they liue in sinne and ignorance, hauing no care to know Gods will; and if they know it, yet no care to obey the same, but they for the most part continue in their sinnes. Seeing their case is such, who could not out of Gods word, in good conscience foretell and prophesie (by this generall rule) that God will come against them shortly, to take vengeance on them, and to plague them? Though we may flatter our selues, and think all is well, yet we must assure our selues he cannot but come, vntill we repent. This should then moue vs all to repent, to humble our selues, condemne our selues for our sins, craue pardon, purpose newnesse of life, desire the Lord that he would in Christ be reconciled.

reconciled to each of vs, and promise and performe euer after new obedience. If we doe repent daily for new and particular sinnes, then we shall stay the Lord, preuent his coming to punish vs: but if we go on in sinne, assure our selues the Lord is true of his promise, he will come in iudgement against vs.

The second reason is directed to the Nicolaitans, *With whom he wil fight*, that is, be at enmitie with them, and declare the same in waging battell with them, seeing they hold these two grosse and damnable opinions.

With the sword of my mouth. That is, the preaching and publishing of the word, the ministry and dispensation of the law and the Gospell among men. In which words he still alludeth to the doing of *Balaam*; as in the doctrine, so in the end and scope: for when *Balaam* cursed the children of Israel, the Angell stood against him, to stay and hinder him that he should not go: he seeing the Angel, fel downe and worshipped the Angel, that is, the son of God Christ Iesus: but after, seeing he would not be restrained, but went to curse the people, he perished by the sword. *Numb. 31.* Euen so Christ dealeth with the Nicolaitanes, as he did with *Balaam*: seeing they went on still in wickednes, he fighteth with them to reclaime them from their wicked wayes, he withstands them with the sword of his mouth, but if they will needs go on, then he fights, not to reclaime them, but to slay them, as he did *Balaam*.

But I will fight against thee, not kill thee, for Christ he intended not at the first to slay them, but to withstand them, and if it might be to reclaime them: but after, if they would not be hindered and stayed, to destroy them, as he did *Balaam*.

Seeing Christ comes against the wicked and impenitent, not *vs* 1: to kill them, but to withstand and hinder them at the first: we see his wonderfull patience toward sinners and wicked men. So *Gen. 6.* the Lord strued and wrestled with the old world one hundred and twentie yeares, that they might repent; by the preaching of *Noah*: and *Genes. 16.* he bare with the *Amo- nites*, till their sinnes were come to the full: and he bare with the *Aegyptians* many hundred yeares: nay the Iewes after they had killed Christ, were not straight way consumed, but the Lord:

suffered them fiftie yeares. So the Lord suffereth sinners, the blasphemers, adulterers, and cruell man to liue, cometh often to them by his word, not to kill them at first, but to winne and reclaime them. And so euery one of vs seeleth his mercie, in that he might destroy and cast vs into hell, so soone as we be borne: yet he suffereth vs to liue, some twentie, thirtie, or fortie yeares, that we might haue a time and space to repent, and turne to Christ. Then it is our dutie to take this occasion, to take this time of Gods patience, not to let it slip, but haste to repentance ere the time of patience be ended. The old world had one hundred and twentie yeares of patience, but neglecting it they perished, the time of mercie being ended. Seeing they wold not heare *Noah*, therefore they be now in prison, that is, in hell. Againe, in that Christ saith, he will come thus against the Nicolaitanes, we see, that they which repent not, haue God for their enemy to fight against them, (and for this cause, sinne is called rebellion against God.) Now this is a most fearefull thing, to haue God mans enemy: let vs then repent, that we may haue God a friend to vs, as he was to *Abraham*, and as Christ was to his disciples.

1. Pet. 3. 20.

I will come to thee, and fight against thee. Here Christ sheweth he is the true Pastor and Doctor of the Church, he can deuide the word aright, giue promises to them to whom they belong, and threatnings to whom they belong: for iudgements and promises must not be propounded to all equally, but there must be regard had of time, place, and persons. For iudgements, some be temporall, which must be threatned to the penitent: some eternal, and those to the impenitent. So promises are to be made, not hand ouer head, but with respect; condition, limitation, and restraint. To propound either promises or threatnings otherwise, is not to deuide the word aright.

With the sword of my mouth: that is, the ministerie of the word, not to kill them, but to resist and withstand them which repent not: and this is the chiefe end and scope of the preaching of the word, to winne men from their sinnes and wicked wayes; and if they will not repent, then to drowne them in perdition and to slay them. In this Church of England, and in this congregation, we haue had the Gospel this 36 yeares published and preached

to vs, the Lord hath rebuked vs for our finnes, and yet we still abide in them without repentance: the Lord still cometh against vs with the sword of his mouth, stil checkes vs for our finnes, and controlleth the wicked idolater, Atheist, fornicator & cruel man, he stands to fight against such, face to face, stands with his naked sword in the ministry of the word, to reclaime them from their sins; if they wil not, to wound them to the heart, and to kil them. Now we hearing our sins reprooued, we should feare and tremble, fall down as *Balaam* did: and seeing the Lord in the word preached, stands with his sword in his hand, ready to slay vs if we wil not be stayed, we should be afraid, If we heare of an enemy to come against vs, how will euery one quake for feare: shall we feare the shaking sword of a mortal man, and not the bloudy sword of the euerliuing God? Shall we resist him and go on, though he fight against vs? Alas it is not wisdome to strive with God, for then he will hacke vs to peeces: but we must heare him, and submit our selues to his good will & pleasure; and if we wil not, the same sword of God shall be an instrument to pierce our hearts to death. Then when we heare the Minister speaking to vs, we must know that the Lord speaketh to vs, fights against our sins, and not contemne him. Again, we see the word of God is called the sword of Christs mouth, not only because he once deliuered it, but because it dayly proceeds fro him in the preaching of the same by the Ministers.

Then we see this is an excellent thing, that the Ministers of Christ lawfully called, they be that mouth of Christ, from which his sword proceeds. So *Paul* calleth them the Ambassadors of Christ to deliuer his word. 2. *Cor.* 5. 19.

Then they which be in the schooles of the Prophets; and they also which be in the way to the same, must learne to thinke reuerently and highly of it, not contemne it, and thinke it a base calling: for to be a Lawyer or Phisition, hath not this priuiledge, to be called the mouth of Christ, as the Ministers haue. Again, seeing they be the mouth of Christ, Ministers must speake the word of Christ, as they are perswaded in conscience Christ would speake the same if he were present, Euen as Ambassadors, who deliuer their masters will, in that maner and those words

which they thinke he would himselfe: which if we did, then we should not haue that humane kind of preaching, partly in Greeke, Latin, & English, mingled with testimonies and sentences of men: for Christ would neuer preach so, neither did his Apostles or Prophets vse it. Furthermore, seeing the Minister lawfully called is the mouth of Christ, we must take heed, that we seeing a mortall man, sinfull like to vs, deliuer the word, that we contemne it not for his sake, but receiue the word as it is indeed the power of God, though it come from a mortall man. So *Paul* commends the *Thessalonians*, who receiued his doctrine as the word of the euer liuing God. Besides, seeing Christ carieth his Scepter in his mouth, not in his hand, we see his kingdom is not of this world; not carnall but spirituall, he governeth and ruleth his Church and people by the sword of his mouth, the eternall word of God, published and preached by sinfull man like to vs.

This sheweth the abuse of that sword, which the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, chalengeth: for he will haue both swords, ciuil and Ecclesiasticall: surely he is not the Vicar, and in the roome of Christ, for Christ was content onely with the spirituall sword.

Now followeth the conclusion of the Epistle, containing two parts: the first a commandement, *Let him which hath an eare heare*; the second, a promise, *To him which overcometh, will I giue to eat of the Manna, &c.* Of the first I haue spoken before. The end and scope of this commaundement, is to stir vp the Church to attention, to marke the things propounded. The first speciall point what is commaunded to be heard, is, the word of God, which must not be heard with a bare and simple hearing, but with knowledge, faith, beleefe, and obedience in practise.

Seeing he commaunds this hearing to all men, we see it is the ordinance of God, all men in the Church should frequent sermons, where this word of God is propounded and taught by plaine and simple men, that they may better learne their dutie. At a good time men wil come to the Church, though they come not halfe a yeare after: but the ordinance of Christ is, that men should daily at all lawfull occasions frequent sermons, and come to the congregation: and if we be his sheepe, we will heare his voice.

voice: *Ioh. 10.* & desire to heare his word, taught by his mouth. *Mat. 16.* the word of God is called the key of the kingdome of heauen: now as necessarie it is to haue the key to open heauen, as to haue his soule brought thither. *Paule* calleth the doctrine of the Gospell, the word of reconciliation, because the same by Gods grace reconcileth vs to him, who being his enemies, are made by it to be in his fauour. Then we must come to heare it daily, not at Christmas or such times alone, for this is to magnifie those dayes about the Lords day. But men corrupt & forward, say for themselves: Tush, if God, or Christ, or his Apostles wold preach to vs, we wold come: but when men speake to vs, being sinfull and like our selues, we will not. *Ans.* It is the will and ordinance of God, that his word should be published and preached to man, by man like himselfe: for since *Adams* fall, man could not abide to heare the Maiestie of God: the *Israelites* seeing but a glimmering of Gods glorie, could not abide it, but said: *Speake to vs by Moses, Exod. 19.* And he will haue his word preached by sinfull man, to trie mans obedience and humilitie, how he will receiue and obey the word of God deliuered by man. Again, he doth it, to make loue betweene man and man, when one man speaketh the word of God to another. Then are they presumptuous persons, who dare oppose themselves against Gods most holy ordinance and will. Again, others say they haue the Bible, containing the Sermons of Christ, the Apostles and Prophets, and who can make better Sermons then they? now seeing they haue these at hand, they need not come to the Church. But let these consider, that as it is the ordinance and will of God to haue the Bible, so will he haue it expounded by man in the Church, that men might vnderstand it, and so make vse of it in their liues. As for some others, they will not come to the Church, but hauing a iourney, (as they say) they can serue God on their horse backe, or in the way, as well, and with as good a heart as the best in the Church: but let these heare the word of God, by the wisest man, *Salomon, Pro. 28. 16.* *He which turneth his eare from the law:* that is, from hearing the word of God, *his prayers are abhominable.* And if he turne from God, God will turne from him: and if men be wearie of his

word, God will be wearie of their seruice, of all their prayers, and other seruice where or whatsoeuer. Lastly, many thinke they haue knowledge enough, no man can teach them that they know not already. But the preaching of the word serueth not onely to beget knowledge, but to increase the same: and also to beget in man obedience to his knowledge: so that these, though they seeme to be the wisest, are most foolish: no man, no not the greatest learned, but he hath knowledge in part, and it may be increased: and say, he get not more knowledge, yet he may by the word deliuered by a plaine and simple man, be brought to obedience of that he knoweth. Another principall dutie comanded in the conclusion, is reading the word, both in publike and priuate, that so we may be prepared to heare and obey the same. So Christ (*Luk. 10. 26.*) *What readeest thou?* he taketh it for graunted, that the young man could reade the lawe. *Esay. 5. 13.* for want of Gods word and knowledge, the people of God went into captiuitie. And yet we see among vs many families which come to church, heare the word, nay, receiue the Sacraments, not knowing the thing assured in them: neither hauing a Bible to reade, nor procuring others if they cannot: yet many haue a Bible lying on their cupbord, but vse it not. The tables, cards, and dice, they be well vsed and worne, but the booke of God lyeth couered with dust. Many will haue the booke of Statutes, that they may know their dutie, but none careth to haue the Statutes of God, to teach them to range their vnbridled affections within the compasse of the same.

Vas. 17.

And to him which ouercommeth. Here is the second part of the conclusion: namely, the promise, which is the same in substance with those annexed with the two former Epistles. In this promise, note two points: first, to whom it is made: secondly, what is promised. First, the persons to whom promise is made: namely, they which overcome. To overcome (as before) is to beleue, to put all our trust and confidence in Christ alone, and to get victorie against all our spirituall enemies.

That we may overcome so, we must do two things: first, we must denie our selues, and all that is in vs, & put our whole confidence in Christ alone: secondly, we must maintaine true religion,

gion, and a good conscience in all things, to our last end: and this is indeed to overcome all our spirituall enemies. Now seeing God maketh this promise to them which overcome, we must labour to come to this estate, that so we may be partakers of the promise.

vſe.

The second point, is the thing promised: *He will give him to eate of the hidden Manna, &c.* The thing promised is a threefold gift of God: first, to eate of that Manna: secondly, he shall haue a white stone: thirdly, a new name written in the same white stone. Which three signifie our election, vocation, justification, sanctificatiō & glorification; and to be the children of God. To come to the first: *to eate of the hidden Manna.* Manna signifieth properly that food which God gaue the children of Israell from heauen to feed them in the wilderness, *Psalm. 98.* For the excellencie of it, it is called the wheat of heauen, and the foode of strong men, or of Angels: in forme, it was like Coreander seed, white and sweet, as *Moses* saith, by which the Lord fed them in the wilderness fortie yeares from heauen, to teach them, man liueth not by bread onely, but by the word of God, And this is thought of many to be the same white Manna sold in shops, but I stand not on that, and it is to be doubted. But this Manna signifieth another food, *1. Cor. 10.* it is the spirituall foode which our fathers did eate: namely, the food of our souls, that is, Christ the true Manna, and bread of life which came from heauen. *Iohn 6.* sheweth, that Christ is that food, and spirituall meate of our soules, feeding vs to eternall life. *Ob.* But how can Christ the Sonne of God become our meat and food? *Ans.* By these conclusions: first, Christ is food, not in respect of his doctrine, or his miracles, or in regard of his death, passion or obedience alone, but in regard of himselfe, as he is Christ, God and man. And here he is called the Lord of life, first, in regard of himselfe, then in regard of his benefites. The second conclusion: he is our food not as he lay in the cratch, or as he is now in heauen, but as he died, was buried, rose, & suffered the paines of hell: dead Christ, crucified Christ, he is our food of life; for fro his death cometh our life. The third conclusion; Christ is food, not in regard of his Godhead or Deitie, but in regard of his manhood: I say, of

Numb. 11.7.

his manhood, not simply in it selfe, but as it is in the Godhead, subsisting by the Deitie: as he is God and man, so is his bodie and bloud our food: yet Christ is not a bodily and sensible food to be receiued with our hand, mouth, and into our stomacke, but he is a spirituall food, to be receiued onely by the hand of faith into the stomacke of our soules, whereby they be fed to eternall life. And thus we eate him, when we belecue, and assure our selues, that he was dead, buried, and crucified for vs in particular.

use 1.

Seeing Christ crucified is the bread of life, and the spirituall Manna whereon our soules must feed, we must long and hunger after Christ spiritually, as truly and sensibly as we do after meate and drinke. We see when a man is famished, he will eate his owne flesh, teare and pull it off his armes to satisfie hunger. Now shall we thus pull our owne flesh, and shall we not spend all we haue, to haue this food of our soules? In the hunger of the stomacke be two things: first, there is a paine in the nether part and bottome of the stomacke, and from this there cometh a strong and hungrie appetite, which lasteth till the belly and appetite be filled and satisfied. So we should feele a paine in our hearts, rising from the feare of Gods wrath for our sinnes and offences: and withall we must feele an hungering and longing appetite to haue this paine taken away, to haue this appetite satisfied, which is onely by that food, of the bodie and bloud of Christ. Secondly, there is besides that paine, an appetite and longing after meate, and an earnest desire to be satisfied: now, as the stomacke longeth after meate, so should the stomacke of our soules (feeling a paine) long, and haue an earnest appetite to be filled and satisfied in some sort, neuer quiet till we haue got the bodie and bloud of Christ (which is the true food of our soules) to satisfie our hungrie appetite. But our case (for the most part) is miserable, we haue a dead flesh growne ouer our hearts, they be not touched with any paine of our wants and miseries. But we must labour to see our hunger and want of Christ: for as they which be thus hungrie shall be fed, so they which be full, shall be sent emptie away. Oh, they be blessed which hunger after Christ, they shall haue the bread of life, and drinke

drinke of the well of life. *Ioh. 6.*

Seeing Christ is the bread of life, the true Manna, signified by *Vse 2.* that in the wilderness: we see the madnesse of most men in the world: who seeke not for this spirituall Manna of the soule, which is farre better then that in the wilderness: but we like the Israelites delight in onions and garlike, and the flesh-pots of Egypt. And are not we as prophane as they, seeing we labor much to get earthly Manna, temporall food, riches, pleasure, &c. but neuer seek to haue Christ the food of our soules, the bread of life. Yet these which do so, be the wise mē of the world, we couēt the of credit, and happieſt mē: but they be indeed prophane *Esaies*, preferring this temporall food before Christ the food of eternal life. We must then labour to detest this abhominable prophaneſſe, seeing it is the very defacing of religion. But Christ shall take it in the highest disgrace, when he seeth vs preferre bread which perissheth, before this precious and eternall food of our soules. And here in that Christ meaneth by Manna, not corporal food, but himſelfe, his owne body and blood (for that corporall foode was but a ſigne of this): we see the ſigne in the ſacrament is put for the thing ſignified, Manna for the body of Christ.

Christ addeth *the hidden Manna*, to put a diſtinction betweene the earthly Manna, which the Israelites, and all might ſee, feele, and eate, and Christ who is the hidden Manna, and whom euery one cannot ſee. It is called hidden, firſt becauſe no man by nature can haue this foode, no naturall man can ſee, will, or deſire it: ſecondly, becauſe God reuealeth not this ſpirituall food, namely Christ, effectually to all men. *Math. 11. 25.* The wiſe and prudent cannot know it, it is reuealed onely to Gods children.

Seeing Christ is the hidden Manna, we ſee the eſtate of men *Vſe.* in the world, yea in the Church of God, they know not Christ the true bread of life, they feele no want of this food becauſe they know it not: for a man cannot know truly what food is till he ſtand in need of it, & feele the want of it: nay, not onely the people, but Preachers, though they know Christ in a mentall knowledge, yet they know not him as they ſhould, they feele no want of Christ to be their Sauour to deliuer them from the

wrath of God, to feed their starued and famished soules, and to deliuer them from the gulfe of hell.

Then we must not content our selues with knowledge swimming in the braine, but labour to know our wants, to feele our misery, to seeke to haue Christ the food of our soules, to deliuer vs from the misery and wretched estate we are in; by it to labour to get but one drop of bloud to satisfie our hungry and starued soules. And as one which is starued with hunger would seeke to haue meate, so we must haue experimentall knowledge, that we can say in conscience, I see and feele how I want Christ to feed my soule.

Seeing Christ is the hidden Manna, God offereth him not to all men in generall, for then he should not be hid as he is from many, therefore there is no vniuersal election, no vniuersal grace offered effectually to all men in particular.

The second gift is, *a white stone*: where Christ borroweth a phrase of speech from the Gentiles, to whom he wrote. The Gentiles vsed these stones in iudgement; for when men were iudged, the Iudges gaue them either a white stone, which was a token of absolution, or a blacke stone, which was a signe of condemnation. Secondly, they vsed these stones, to trie whether such a day or such should be luckie (as they say) or vnluckie; for if they tooke a white stone out of their vessel, then it was a token of good lucke; if a black, then of bad. Now here it is vsed for the first.

vs. Christ promiseth a white stone, that is, pardon and absolution from sinnes, and from the punishment of sinne, euen eternall damnation. To them which ouercome, beleue, labour to maintaine and defend faith and a good conscience, let these go on to the end, for they shall haue this white stone. Now then, if any would know whether he haue pardon and absolution of his sins, here is the note and marke; if he beleue in Christ, labour to maintaine faith and a good conscience, then he hath this white stone promised him. Then we must labour for these, that so the other may be sealed to vs.

The third gift is, *A new name written in the same stone*. This name is to be Gods child: so the same Apostle expounds it, 1.

Iohn

Iohn 3. Behold what great love God sheweth vs, even to be called his sonnes: this is the name he giueth to them which ouercome, to be called his sonnes, and heires with Christ.

Now seeing God giueth this new name to his children, it must not be an idle name: but the Lord giueth with it a new condition, whereby we are made the sonnes and heires of God. So when *Abram* was new named *Abraham*, it was for a speciall purpose; for then he began to be the father of the faithfull. When *Iacob* was called *Israel*, it was for a speciall end. So we hauing a new name, must haue a new condition, which is, to be called the sonnes and heires of God in Christ. Now this is a most excellent prerogatiue, for then we haue Christ our elder brother, and our fellow heire, God our father, the Angels to defend and guide vs, all things and meanes of this life to our benefite, Gods speciall providence to guide vs, and being Gods childre, our sins are no sins, but a meanes to come to felicitie: and our death is no death, but a litle doore to passe to life: this is the new condition God giueth with our new name.

Written in the white stone: That is, in the pledge of absolution; for here the white stone and new name go together: for looke whom he absolue, he giueth a new name and new condition: for he which hath his sinnes pardoned, is a new creature, a new man: the white stone and new name go together, and are written in each other. Then men must haue them both, and not as most do, say they hope Christ is their Sauour, he will pardon their sinnes, and yet continue in them, & take occasion by that to sinne: for Christ if he giue the white stone, that is, pardon of sinne, he giueth with it a new name, and a new condition of life.

Which no man knoweth. Some might object: Doth he giue men new names, why then do we not call them by their names? *Answer.* He saith, no man knoweth it but he which hath it, that is in that maner and certainty as he which receiues it, for no man can know or discern it: then men must not thinke strange though he be not called by this new name. The world knoweth vs not. *I. Iohn 3. 1.*

Now in that he which hath this new name, knowes it, and vs.

seeth that he is the child of God, and fellow-heire with Christ, that he is called, iustified, sanctified, and that none knowes it but he which hath receiued it. This cōfutes the Papiſts, who say, they know it, but not certainly, but in hope, and by coniecture and probabilitie. But we see he knowes it certainly, infallibly, without doubt, for he knowes it better then any other: other men know it by coniecture, but he knoweth it certainly.

No man knowes this new name so certainly & infallibly, and frō within, as he which receiues the same, for no man can determine of the faith, adoption or calling of any, but himself: for that is proper to God to search the heart. This must stay our censure and iudgement, to iudge men to be hypocrites, to condemne either the better or bad sort of men, for we know not a mans heart, his faith is but knowne to God and himselfe.

Obiect. How farre may we iudge of anothers state of saluation? *Ans.* We iudge of another mans estate, either certainly or not: certainly, as when one iudgeth, and sets downe certainly and resolutely, that such men are elected to saluation without all doubt: but this is proper to God, no man can know the spirit of man but God and the man himself, and so farre as it pleaseth him to reueale the same to some of his children; as to *Dauid* he reuealed the damnation and reiection of some, for which cause he prayeth for their destruction. Now besides this, there is the iudgement of charitie, when we iudge of another as charitie moueth vs: now charitie maketh a man iudge the best. This charitie hath two parts, first it is not to despaire: secondly it is to iudge of a mans saluation vndoubtedly, to be perswaded of it certainly. We must not despaire, though we see men liue in sin. And we must iudge certainly of mens saluation, and without doubt that they be called effectually, in that they testifie their faith, by their obedience, not that we can set downe certainly, but we must in charitie iudge so of them. And this is charitie in the highest degree, when we iudge that such a one is the child of God by the fruites of his faith.

Here again they of the Church of Rome are deceiued, making the Church to haue this note and property to be visible, but not visibilitie: but election, adoption, and faith are the principall
markes

markes of the Church. Now these cannot be seene, onely the fruites of them may.

¶ And to the Angell. Here beginneth the fourth particular Epistle. The end & scope of these words, is to certifie the church of Thyatira, that *John* had a speciall commandement and calling from God, first, to write this Epistle: secondly, to certifie all Churches to the end of the world, that he had a commandement and calling from God to write, not onely this Epistle, but this whole booke: and for that cause this is seuen times repeated, *To the Angell, &c.*

The Epistle beginneth here: *These things write, &c.* and continueth almost to the end of this Chapter: in it note three parts: first, a Preface: secondly, a Proposition: thirdly, a Conclusion. The preface or entrance in the eighteenth verse, all which were in the former Chapter: verses 5. 14. 15. *These things saith.* In the preface: note first, in whose name it is written: namely in the name of Christ. The cause why his name is in the Preface, is set downe before. Christ is described by three arguments: first, he is the Son of God: secondly, his eyes are like a flame of fire: thirdly, his feet like fine brasse. Christ is here said to be the Son of God. In the former Chapter he was called the sonne of man: here the Sonne of God. By God, he meaneth not the Godhead as it is absolutely or common to all the three persons: but by it is meant the Father, who when he is conferred with any person in the Trinitie, is called God, not that he is more God, then the Sonne and holy Ghost; or that they be not equall, but for order, in that he is the first person, & fro him the Godhead is communicated to the Sonne and holy Ghost. How Christ is called the Sonne of God, we may know by these two rules: first, Christ is the Sonne of the Father, not in respect of his Godhead, or as he is God, but in respect of his person: and in respect of his person he is begotten of the Father before all worlds. For the Godhead of Christ the Sonne, is not begotten, or begetteth not, nor proceedeth, but he hath one and the same Godhead with the Father: therefore it no more begetteth, or is begotten, or proceeding then his. The second rule, Christ is the Sonne of the Father, not by creation, as the Angels and *Adam*, nor by grace

as true beleeuers in Christ; but by nature, in that he is begotten of the substance of the Father before all worlds. Because the Father communicated to him from himself his whole Godhead and nature: and by this communication of the Godhead to his Son wholly, he is said to beget the Sonne, and he is said to be begotten of the Father. The end why Christ is called the Sonne of God, is, namely, to stirre up in this Church of Thyatira, care and diligence, reuerence and attention in marking and obeying the things of this Epistle, seeing that he which teacheth them is the Sonne of God: teaching vs in their example, when we heare the word read or preached, we must haue attention, diligent care and feare, seeing it is the Sonne of God which speaketh to vs. When *Pilate* was condemning Christ, and heard he was the Sonne of God, he was affraid. Shall an heathen man which knew not God, feare to heare of Christ the Son of God: and shall not we tremble to heare him speake to vs himselfe? At the voice of Christ the mountaines melted, and the rockes claue asunder, and shall not our stonie and rockie hearts tremble to heare him speake to vs out of his word?

His eyes were like a flame of fire. We must not take these words literally, but as in the former Chapter: for Christ is set out as he appeared in vision to *John*. By his fierie eye is meant, first, that in him is infinite wisdom, he seeth all things, he knoweth by his fierie and piercing eye, all things, present, past, and to come. Secondly, it signifieth his vigilancie and watchfulnesse ouer his Church, and every particular member of the same, for these two ends: first, to preserve and protect his own children, secondly to take reuenge and punishment on his enemies. Thirdly, by his fierie eye, is signified his anger against sinnes and sinners. Christ is said to haue fierie eyes, to teach vs, that he can discern secret and hidden sinnes: for in this Chapter we find, that certaine men in this Church were giuen to fornication and idolatrie, close and hidden sinnes. Now here he is said to haue fierie eyes, to shew them, he seeth these secret sinnes; he knoweth their hearts, much more their sinfull workes, and will punish them.

Vse. Then by this we haue a good remedie against all secret sins. The nature of man is, for shame, and feare of punishment,

to abstaine from outward crimes: but being out of the companie of men, he will breake the commandement of the first and second Table, without any care or conscience; and this euery mans conscience can best testifie: that though he can abstaine from outward sinnes for shame and punishment, yet he will commit secret sinnes. But these men should remember, that though they be out of the presence of men, yet they stand in the presence of Christ, he seeth them, his fierie eye pierceth to their inward thoughts and affections: and though they may bleare the eyes of men, yet they cannot bleare this fierie eye of Christ. If euery man would remember this, the fornicator, blasphemor, or any sinner, it would be a good meanes to bridle and stay the from committing sinnes, both open and hidden.

And his feet like fine brasse. He is said to haue brazen feet, to shew his strength and power, by which he ouercame and bruiſed the head of the serpent on the crosse, and fully vanquished hell, death and sinne by his death, and also doth subdue sinne and Satan, and put them vnder not onely his brazen foot, but vnder the feet of his seruants and members.

The end why he is said to haue feet of brasse here in this Epistle, is to terrifie certaine wicked persons in this Church, as fornicators, and idolaters, nay the whole Church of Thyatira, which by these wicked men, were in daunger to be drawne that way.

This then may be a remedie for all loose liuers: namely, to consider of Christs brazen feet, to thinke that Christ our Saviour is in the midst of the Church, walketh there, and that he hath a foote of brasse to trample and tread all his enemies to powder, and to destroy them. The want of this, is the cause why men lie in sinne, and heape sinne vpon sinne without care, or conscience, or any feare.

The second part of the Epistle is the Proposition, wherein is propounded the substance and matter of the Epistle. It hath two parts: first, a praise: secondly, a dispraise or rebuke. The commendation, in the 19. verse: the dispraise, in the 20. verse. First, she is commended generally, *I know thy workes*: secondly, particularly, for many duties and vertues.

I know thy workes: that is, I see and allow thy workes and wayes. The end why he alleadgeth and repeateth these words, is to stirre vp the hearts of his seruants, to consider of his presence For Christ before hath fierie eyes, and here he saith, *I know thy workes*, to make this consideration, to sinke more deeply, and imprint it more throughly.

In the second part he commendeth her for many duties and vertues: first, *loue*: secondly, *seruice*: thirdly, patience: fourthly, faith and increase of godlinesse. First, she is commended for *loue*: that is, loue to man, not to God, for, for that she is comended after in the duties to God. But by loue and seruice is meant duties to man, performed by man to man. To know this loue better, note three points: first, what it is: secondly, the property of true loue to man: thirdly, how it must be practised toward men. Loue to man is a gift of Gods spirit, whereby a man is well affected to his neighbour for Gods sake. First, loue is the gift of the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 25*. Secondly, it is a gift whereby a man is well affected to his neighbour, that is, to reioyce at his good, to defend, to seeke and wish his good; yea, to be grieved with his hurt and miserie, and withall to haue bowels of compassion to helpe him in his hurt and miserie. Thirdly, it must be to our neighbour, not by dwelling or habitation, but to them which be our brethren in nature, haue the same flesh with vs, & beare the same image of God. Then all men, as they be men, are our neighbours, though they dwell at the worlds end, whether beleeuer or infidell, friend or foe, to these we must be wel affected. Fourthly, it must be for Gods sake: for God must first absolutely and principally be loued, and man for him: so that our loue to man is a fruit of our loue to God, springing and descending from it. As for the propertie of our loue to man, it must be seruent, and that in two things: first, if need require, euery man is bound in the compasse of his calling, to lay downe his life for his brother, and for his neighbour, *1. Ioh. 3. 16*. Secondly, it must be seruent towards our enemies: in the world there is much hatred, malice and iniuries. Now we must loue those persons from who these come, and loue must be seruent, that these like water do not quench it. And for the practise of our loue to man, the rule is,

that

that we loue him as our selues : as we loue and wish well to our selues heartily, so must we loue and wish well to him. This is the law of nature, to do to another as we would haue him to do to vs: yea this is the law of God; do to all men as you would haue them do to you. Is a man to sell? the diuell offereth him gaine, if he will lie. Now consider by thine owne law, wouldest thou haue another to deceiue thee by lying? no surely: then deceiue not thy neighbor by false weights, wares, or otherwise. By these three things we see for what this Church was commended. This loue were to be wished in vs, but alas it waxeth cold, euery man is a louer of himselfe, seeketh his owne good, no man his brothers: euery man spends his labor, wit, and his calling to help himself, no man to do good to others, to help the common good, or the good of the Church, but to the hurt or hindering of others: for men think they may make the best of their owne, sell as deare as they can: but we should employ all our callings, if we had true loue, not onely to our owne good, but the good of others, euen the common good of the towne, country, or church. When men come to the Church, to heare the word, to pray, to receiue the sacrament, then they seeme to shew great loue of God, but look into their callings, there is no loue of their brethren: which sheweth they haue no true but an outward loue of God, seeing they loue not their neighbour, liue by iniustice, seeking to sleigh him, and draw out his very bloud by cruell dealing, by griping, pilling, and polling: now there cannot be true loue of God, where this loue of our neighbour is wanting. 1. *Iohn* 3. 21.

The second vertue for which this church is comended, is *seruice*. In this place it is a vertue and work of loue, whereby a Christian man becomes a seruant to euery man for his good. This is commended and described, *Heb.* 6. 10. *Paul Gal.* 6. commaunds vs to do seruice one to another by loue. 1. *Cor.* 13. loue seekes not her owne, but the good of others. So Christ (*Iohn* 13.) commaunds his to be seruants one to another, in those good things which God giueth vs. As we must do them good in all we can, so one speciall dutie here mentioned, is to be ready to releue (according our abilitie) the want of the Church, for we must haue first loue and charitie, then seruice as a braunch springing from loue.

Heb. 6. 10. which is when we are ready to bestow our goods or gifts, which God giueth vs, to the good of the Church, especially the godly in the Church. This were to be wished in England, but it is not, seeing the richest sort bestow their goods in hawks, hounds, beares, buls, dogs, and other their pleasure and pastime: but when any comes to be bestowed on the poore, then they be strait handed, all comes as hardly fro the as a rib out of their side. We see men can be content yearly to bestow much money in playes, pastimes, and other delights, and that with zeale and earnestnes: but come to the poore, our owne flesh, to our brother, who beares the same image of God as we do, here we stick, and from winter to winter suffer them to starue for want of that which our dogs haue. To moue men to help the poore: first see how men in the old testament were charged with offerings, first fruites, sacrifices, and many other ceremonies: now these be ended; but in stead of that altar, the poore they be the altar, whereon we must offer our burnt offerings & our sacrifices. Secondly, *Esay 58. 10.* he which imparts his heart to the poore, that is, seeing him in want, hath his heart touched with the bowels of compassion, and testifies his loue in releeuing his want: this man hath a happie promise, his name shall not be put out, but shine for euer: and this is true religion, *to visit the fatherlesse and widow, to comfort and releene them, Iam. 1. Prou. 25. He which giueth to the poore, lendeth to the Lord.* Now the Lord he comes in his person to borrow, he makes the poore his stewards to gather it in: wilt thou say him nay, to lend him of his owne? thou wilt not. Wouldest thou haue him stay, or send his steward away emptie. Again, Christ comes in their person, he askes an almes, he saith in their person, I am hungry, naked, fatherles and motherles, and in them he stands crauing at our doores. Now if we would escape that horrible sentence of condemnation, *Away from me, &c.* let vs not say him nay, or deny him. But if we wil be liberall in any thing, and bestow largely on any thing, bestow it on the poore, our owne flesh, and so we lend to God who is the best paymaster, and we giue to Christ, who will not let it be vnrewarded.

Now followeth the third particular vertue, for which Christ commends the Church of *Thyatira*, which is *faith*, that is, fidelitie

litie, whereby we are faithfull to God, in keeping our promise made to him in baptisme: wherein we promise to renounce our selues, to beleue in God, three persons, one true God, to obey him all our life time: this is commaunded, *1.Tim.5.12.* Now it would be wished, that our Church might be commended for this fidelitie, but it cannot: for though it be a common thing among vs to swear by our faith, yet there is litle faith in our hearts, yea litle care to keepe this fidelitie promised in baptisme: for some of vs lie in ignorance, neuer knowing what promise we haue made to God; and such are many among vs, young, olde, high, low, rich, & poore. Others they haue no care of goodnes, of heauen or heauenly things, but of eating, drinking, sporting, in which they spend their days, neuer thinking of Christ, or of their promise to him. A third sort, are those which we account honest and wise men; but they come short indeed: for these set their hearts on riches and the things of this world, spend their strength and wit in the getting of them, and haue their hearts glued to them. They like Molds are euer in the earth. We call them (I say) honest men, but indeed they deny God, forsake their first faith and fidelitie to God in baptisme, and in stead of the true God, erect an idoll, euen their riches: and of these we haue great heapes. Then it stands vs in hand, often to remember our promise in baptisme, to renounce our selues, & the things of this world, to beleue in Christ, to performe obedience to him in al our life: for if we go on, and stil deny our first faith, nothing belongs to vs but condemnation.

The fourth vertue, is *patience*, whereof we haue heard in this, and the former chapter. Here marke how patienc is ioyned with loue to men, faith to God, and seruice to men and God. The reason is, because no good action can be done of any man without patience: loue and faith without it are nothing: for if a man do his dutie to man, he shall be sure to be hated: now without patience he ceaseth to do his dutie. So if a man beleue in God, and professe the same, the world contemnes him: now without patience he cannot perseuere constantly. Patience is the effect of faith, *Rom.15.* faith brings forth hope: and *Mar.13.* the good ground brings forth fruit, but in patience. All that a man doth, if

it be done acceptable to God, it must be ioyned with patience. Then we must in all our gifts and graces ioyne patience with our hope, faith, loue, knowledge, &c. 2. *Pet.* 1. 6. No grace can shew it selfe without this, a man cannot endure the crosse without it.

And thy workes, Christ before had said the same: here he repeateth it againe, which is not idle: for no word in scripture is idle: but by this Christ shewes his exceeding approbation of the workes of this Church of Thyatira, that they were such as he liked of, not in a meane, but in exceeding great measure: the cause why he liked them so, followeth afterward.

Now seeing Christ repeates these words after foure worthy vertues, he doth it to shew vs what things are required to a good worke, namely faith, loue, seruice, patience, and fidelity: for to do a worke to God, we must ioyne these foure vertues: and therefore Christ addeth these words both before and after these vertues. First, faith is required, because in doing any actiō, euery mā must shew his fidelitie to God, which we do, when before we do any worke, we search the word of God, whether it be commanded or forbidden there: for no worke we do can please God, vnlesse we be perswaded out of the word that it is lawfull: nay, being not of faith, it is sin, *Rom.* 14. Secondly, our works must not proceed from faith alone, but from faith and loue ioynly together, for faith worketh by loue: and though a man do neuer so good things, if not in loue, it is nothing. 1. *Cor.* 13. Thirdly, a speciall seruice is required to God and man: for all our workes must be done in seruice to man: for the end of our callings be to do seruice to man, and withall in doing seruice to man, to please and serue God. *Paul* commaunds seruants to please their masters in the Lord, as seruing him: so of all men it is vnderstood, that they in doing the workes of their calling, must do them in seruice to men, and withall to serue God. *Col.* 3. 21. This ouerthroweth the Papists fasting, praying, pilgrimage, hard attire, and whipping themselves, to pray to Saints, and offer to them: for these come not from faith and loue, neither are they done in seruice to men, to do them good in soule or body: for these neither benefit themselves nor other. Last of all, patience is requisite that a man may haue constancy and perseuerance, for no man can do a good

good worke as he ought, but many will mocke and leſt at him; he ſhall haue many croſſes by wicked men, euen by Gods prouidence: now that he might be conſtant, patience is neceſſarie, that ſo (as the good ground) he may bring forth fruit, but in patience. To apply this, euery man in doing any thing in his particular calling, muſt labour to ſhew theſe ſoure vertues: his faith to God, loue to man, his ſeruice to God and man, and haue patience to vndergo all troubles which come by doing his dutie. For if a man do the worke of his particular calling, be it neuer ſo baſe, yet it is as good a worke to God in it kind, as to preach the word, and to giue almes.

The fifth vertue is, that *her workes were mo at laſt then at firſt.* The Church of Ephesus was diſcommended for her decay in loue: but here Chriſt commendeth this Church for increaſe in godlineſſe and vertue. It were to be wiſhed, that our Church might be commended for this vertue; but alas it cannot: for the bodie of our people are in number increaſed, but little in pra-
ctiſe and obedience. *Heb. 5.* They indeed in regard of the time might be teachers, hauing ſo long heard the word: but yet they need to be taught euen the principles of religion: for though they heare daily, yet is there no knowledge, no increaſe of zeale or of repentance, no going on in grace: *2. Tim. 3.* they are euer learning, yet neuer come to knowledge. This is a common fault in all eſtates, men heare much, learne little, and pra-
ctiſe leſſe: nay we haue a worſe fault, for many among vs hauing heard good things, go backward, looſe them, become worſe, or elſe ſtand at a ſtay. And this is our ſhame, that many places which heare the word leſſe, go before vs in knowledge, faith, obedience and repentance. Then if we would auoide Gods wrath and diſcommendation, let vs now increaſe. It is not enough for old men to ſay they cannot: though their memorie faile, yet they muſt labour to haue good and zealous affections. Young men muſt employ their ſtrength, and wit, and memorie in this, to increaſe in grace, & not to quench any grace, but to ſtirre the vp: for to him which hath is giuen, but fro him which hath not is taken away that he had. Then all muſt labor to go on in grace, that the teacher may haue comfort, and the hearers be freed

from shame and discommendation.

Verf. 20.

Notwithstanding I haue something against thee. Here Christ after his high commendation, rebuketh the Church of Thyatira: first, the whole Church: secondly, a certaine woman in the Church. The rebuke concerning the whole Church is in the twentieth verse: in which is first, the reproofe it selfe: secondly, the reason of it.

Newerthelesse. That is, though I haue hitherto commended thee, yet thou hast something which I like not, but greatly dislike. Of this I haue spoken before.

Secondly, the reason of the reproofe. *Because thou suffereſt the woman Iſabell to teach:* that is, because they suffered a certain woman, namely *Iſabel*, in the assemblies to teach and seduce the people.

First, obserue in these words, the great power and authority which this Church had giuen her of God: for besides the power of preaching the word, and administration of the Sacraments, she had power to appoint who should preach, who should not: and further authoritie to reſtraine wicked men and women by her seuerer government. The like power was in the Church of Ephesus; & so of al Churches, in preaching of the word, & administration of the Sacraments, to appoint who should preach, and who not, and also to reſtraine wicked men, that they commit not what wickednesse they will in the congregation. And this authoritie hath the Lord giuen to all Churches: nay, without this, no Church can continue or stand. And it is not sufficient to haue rule in the congregation, but seuerer government, whereby wicked men may be kept in order: and because this Church vsed not this power, therefore she is discommended. Now in euery Church where the word is preached, and Sacraments administered, there they haue the same power: yet we see how sin abounds, fornication, adulterie, blasphemie, vsurie, drunkennesse, and all for want of this government, which should reſſeſſe such finnes.

This Church sinned, first, in suffering a woman to teach: secondly, to seduce the people of God. This word *teach*, signifieth to teach publicly in the assemblies. Then they sinned in suffering

fering a woman, *Iſabel*, to teach publicly in the open assemblies of men; For *1. Tim. 2. 8.* I permit not a woman to teach: *1. Cor. 14. 34.* they must keepe silence. But it may objected, first, that *Deborah* and *Huldah* were Prophetesses. *Ans.* They were extraordinarie: and we may not make an ordinarie rule vpon extraordinarie actions. Secondly, *1. Cor. 11.* If a woman pray or prophetic. *Ans.* First, there were such in the infancie of the Church, and were extraordinarie. Secondly, they did sinne, and as a fault it is rebuked in the fourteenth Chapter, where he commaundeth women to be silent. Thirdly, women are said to pray, because they giue assent to the Minister praying; saying Amen, and to prophetic by singing Psalmes, and reading Scripture: for so much the word (Prophecie) signifieth being taken largely. So (*1. Chron. 25.*) *Asaph* is said to prophetic, when he sung with instruments of musicke in the congregation.

Seeing Christ rebuketh them for suffering a woman to teach in the congregation: we see it is not warrantable, that she should administer the Sacrament of Baptisme, no not in the time of necessitie: for the word and Sacraments go together. Now Christ will not haue a woman to preach the word, therefore not to administer the Sacraments. And though women be forbidden to teach in the congregation, yet they must teach at home. *Salomon* he learned many lessons of his mother, who taught him at home. *Prou. 31.* So (*2. Tim. 1. 5.*) *Timothy* was taught by his grandmother *Lois*, and *Eunice* his mother in the Scriptures. But hence some gather, (without ground) that as a woman may not teach, so not gouern. But this cannot be proved out of the word, and it hath no force. For though a woman may not teach, and stand in Christs stead in the congregation, yet she may gouerne and stand in his stead in the Common wealth, be a Queene, Dutchesse, Countesse, &c. For there is special reason why she may not stand in Christs stead in the Church, seeing men onely so stand in his stead: for Christ tooke on him the person of a man, not of a woman: but that letteth not, but she may stand in his stead in the Common wealth, if she come to it by succession, seeing it is her patrimonie and inheri-

v/ci.

tance. And we haue great cause to blesse almighty God for the government of a woman, more then any which euer yet ruled ouer vs. But it is said, the man is the womans head, therefore he must beare rule, not she: *Ans.* He is the head, that is, more excellent, as he is man, but not in regard of any gifts: for a woman may passe a man in grace, and gifts of God, and other respects, and so may haue rule ouer the man, though he be more excellent as he is man, she inferiour as she is woman.

The second fault reprobued in the Church of Thyatira is, *the suffering of a woman to teach and seduce.* Then as to suffer a woman to teach openly in the Church is a fault, so to suffer her to seduce is a fault likewise. Seeing Christ reprobueth them for suffering her: we see it is not left to mans will to teach and hold what he will, but men must be restrained, that they teach and hold nothing which standeth not with the word of God: they must reprove patrons and defenders of sects, and schismes, and new doctrines: for which, our Church is to be commended, which hath lawes for Papists, Protestants, and Recusants, which is both lawfull and commended by Christ.

To aggravate these two faults, he describeth her by her properties: first, that she is called *Iesabel*: that is, one like *Iesabel*: secondly, by her action, she called her selfe a Prophetesse.

First, the woman *Iesabel*. But why doth Christ call her so? First, because this woman was like *Iesabel*, and did in her person reuiue the wicked manners and opinions of *Iesabel*: for as *Iesabel* was an idolater, brought in idolatrie, & the worship of *Baal* among the Israelites: so this woman in the Church of Thyatira. Secondly, as she was giuen to fornication, so this woman was a maintainer and teacher of the same. Thirdly, as *Iesabel* was a woman of authoritie, and by her authoritie did countenance and defend her sinnes, false religion and the worship of *Baal*: so this woman was also of great authoritie, and by the same, taught and maintained her diuellish opinions.

In this reason see the practise of the diuell, who laboureth in ages following, to renew and reuiue the vices and sinnes which were before, & their errors. For as he had *Iesabel* in *Abahs* time, who was a patron of fornication and idolatrie: so in the Apostles

Ates time he had this woman, who renewed these opinions, another *Iesabel* like her. The end is to further his kingdom: for the diuell seeth that these meanes most dishonour God, hurt his kingdome, and most of all build his kingdom: and so he dealeth in al ages, to reuiue the opinions, errors & scismes of old. So they which follow *Machianuel*, imitate the doings of *Achitophel*. So the Papiſts reuiue the errors of the Scribes and Pharises: they which separate themſelues fro our Church, the opiniõ of the Donatiſts: the Family of loue, the error of the Valétinians. The second reason is, becauſe by this name he might draw the to diſlike of her, and not to follow her, but that ſhe might be in as great diſgrace as *Ieſabel* was in the old Teſtament. And this Chriſt doth to teach vs in reading the bookeſ of the old and new Teſtament, if we reade of any wiked men, that we ſhould diſlike their vices and errors, take heed of them and auoid them: nay, if we ſee them in vs, we muſt diſlike our ſelues for them: and contrarily, if we reade of a vetrouſ man or woman, we muſt imitate their vertues, like and loue them, and our ſelues for them, if we haue the ſame.

The ſecond argument whereby he deſcribes her, is her action, *Which calleth her ſelfe a Prophetesse*: that is, ſhe doth challenge to her ſelfe to be ſuch a one as taught the word by the inſtinct and help of Gods ſpirit, and that all ſhe taught was the word of Gods ſpirit. She taught fornication was no ſinne, and that one might go into the Idoll temple and eate of their offerings, and yet ſhe pretends all to be done and taught by Gods ſpirit, making him the teacher and author of her errors.

Seeing wicked men and women father their errors on Gods *vs*. ſpirit, we muſt labour to get the ſpirit of diſcerning, to know whether the ſpirit be of God or not: and we muſt not be of no religion, becauſe many teach falſe doctrine, but rather labour to haue the ſpirit of diſcerning, to try the ſpirits which we heare. Again, when we are accuſed or ſlandered, we muſt be content: for we ſee this woman taught falſe doctrine, and yet fathered it on Gods ſpirit, which indeed was not of him but of the diuell, and ſo made him the author of errors. Now if the Lord be thus dealt withall, made the author of lies by wicked men: ſhall not

we be content, if we be slandered, who by our sinnes deserved the same? As she chalenged her selfe to be a Prophetesse, so she proued her selfe to be one, namely, by her owne testimony, and her owne word, *she said she was one*. Here Christ sheweth the note of a false Prophet, namely, a mans owne word and testimony; but a true Prophet hath many tokens and arguments, to proue him to be so. As in the Primitiue Church they spake sundry tongues without study, often wrought miracles, as scales of a true Prophet. Secondly, they held vnitie of doctrine, in integritie of life and conuersation, to confirme their callings. Thirdly, they had excellent gifts giuen them of God, as zeale, courage, and constancy to maintaine their callings, which were extraordinary: but this woman had nothing, but her owne word and bare testimony.

In the second place (the more to disgrace her and the church of Thyatira) her teaching was described by the end, which *was to deceive men*. Here is another marke of a false Prophet, to teach to seduce and draw men to some sinne or wickednesse. The end of true teaching is godlynes; but of false, it is to draw men to sinne in life and conuersation.

After he describeth her seducing by two arguments: first, the persons, *my seruants*: secondly, the meanes, *to make them commit fornication, and to eate of things offered to idols*. For the persons, *my seruants*: this increaseth her fault, seeing they were excellent men, the seruants of Christ. Hence arise two questions: first, why some men be rather the seruants of Christ then other some: secondly, whether the seruants of Christ can be seduced. For the first, some say, God would haue euery man in the world his seruant, & doth what he can to make them so; he calleth them, redeemeth them, giueth them grace to be his children, reconcileth the to himself, so that they may if they will be saued: now some will not for all this receiue Gods grace, but contemne his mercy though he call them, redeeme them, and giue them grace. But this is against common sense, to make Gods will in subiection & mans will to rule, to disgrace God and set man aloft, to make Gods will to be ordered by mans will. But the reason why some are the seruants of God, not al, is Gods good pleasure in electing some, and reiecting

Being others, for he electeth not all to grace and glory, but some onely, and these be his seruants, by reason of his owne good will and pleasure. Act. 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to life, that is, elected and redeemed of Gods free will and pleasure, they beleeued.*

The second question is, whether a seruant of God can be seduced? *Ans.* Seruants be of two sorts: some are only in appearance, some in deed and truth. Those be onely in appearance which receiue the word and outward seales, but not the inward fruit: and these be in our Churches the greatest part: these may fall away finally and wholly, as did the Galathians and many other. But those which be in truth the seruants of Christ, though they may fall in part, yet they cannot fall wholly or finally. *Mat.* 16. the gates of hel shal striue, & shew their strength against that rocke of faith, but shall not preuaile. So we pray, *Leade vs not into temptation*, that is, let vs neuer be wholly vnder the power of Satan. Now what we pray for, that we haue a promise in the worde for it: and true faith and a constant purpose to liue in any on sinne cannot stand together; for faith purifieth the heart, and preserveth it in life and death: *ergo* a true beleueer cannot fall wholly or finally.

To come to the meanes of discerning them, it is *by committing fornicatio, and eating things offered to idols*. She made the seruants of God to sinne by these two finnes and meanes; which shewes she was a maintainer of the sect of the Nicolaitanes, of whom I spake before.

And I gaue her space to repent. Christ reprobued the Church of Thyatira before for suffering her: here he reproueth her for her obstinacy and hardness of heart, that she would not repent of her finnes. *Reu. 21.*

Time to repent: That is, though her finnes deserued present death, yet God suffered her to liue in the world a space of time, to see if she would repent. Now in her example he teacheth vs how to vse time whilest we liue in the world, namely, seeing it is giuen vs of God to repent in, and so to come to saluation, we must vse it so, & repēt while we haue time. For that cause he lets some liue twenty or forty yeares: for there is no repentance be-

fore we come into this world; or after we go out, therefore while we liue in it we must repent: then we must thinke of it earnestly, that we vse it to repent in, that so we may be reconciled to God receiued to mercy, and haue the kingdome of heauen.

Then damnable is the practife of our daies, when men liue in eating, drinking, sporting, carding, & dicing, in spending their strength and wit in getting riches, neuer thinking of the true end why they liue, which is to repent, and come to saluatiō, but spend their time he giues them to repent other wayes. The Lord might cut them off as soone as they be borne, yet he suffereth them to liue to see if they will repent: then if they runne on in sin, they increase their damnation, and do as a man should euery day cary a faggot for ten yeares to one heape, and be burned himselve with them at the end.

I gaue her: Namely, Christ gaue her time to repent, no creature, no man or Angel can dispose of the time of repentance, but only Christ Iesus, it is in his power alone when one must repent or not.

Then seeing it is not in our power, it is best for vs to repent without delay, while it is called to day. The yong man takes his swinge, because he is yong, as though he could repēt in old age, or when he list: but he robs Christ of his honor, for he alone can dispose of the time of repentance. Then take the present, who knoweth when the Lord will cut him off, and then his estate is miserable. We thinke a man may repent at the last gaspe: but it is not good for a man to deferre, seeing he may die quietly by reason of the sicknesse, yet may die out of Gods fauour. But to whom gaue Christ this time? To *her*: that is, *Iesabel*, a wicked woman. Here we see the endles mercy of God in Christ Iesus, he offereth mercy to *Iesabel*, a leud wicked fornicator, & idolater, a blasphemous wretch, fathering her sinnes on the spirit of God, yet she hath mercy offered. So the Lord dealeth not in iustice, to cut men off, but giueth grieuous sinners time to repent. So did he to *Manasses*, a wisard and idolater, who humbling himselve was receiued to mercy. *Salomon* an idolater, yet repenting, was receiued to mercy, for he was a pen-man of the Scripture, *ergo* an holy man. 2. *Pet.* 1. 20. *Ifay* 1. The Iewes a sinfull people, as ill as they

they which were in hel. The Sodomites and Gomortheans, they had mercy offered if they would repent, and though their sins were as red as crimson, yet God would wash them as white as snow.

We may not hence take occasion to sinne: but they which be grievous sinners must not despaire, if they can repent they shall haue mercy.

Of her fornication. She had sundry finnes, especially idolatry, which cannot want company, for no sinne goeth alone. Christ calleth her to repent for that one sinne of fornication, because that was the most principall sin, the head sinne of that womans: teaching vs, that when we repent, we must begin with our greatest sins, which most clog our conscience, and by which we offend most. Againe, he which can repent truly of one great sin, he repents of all: if he hate the greater, he will hate the lesser.

Then we in repentance must begin at the greater sin, and repent in particular for it: for confused repentance is not true; as to say, I am a sinner, &c. but repentance in particular for particular finnes, beginning at the head sinne which most troubleth vs, that is true repentance.

Seeing Christ saith, he gaue her time to repent: hence the Papists gather, free will, namely to do good, and to repent, for else this admonition were in vaine. But it followes not, for God gaue her time to repent, and commaundement to repent, for other ends: first, that then he may with the time giue grace also to repent, that so she and we may see what we should do, and withall see our owne want, that we are not able to do as we are commaunded, and so to make vs inexcusable.

And she repented not. Here *Iseabels* sinne is set downe, namely impenitency, and going on in her sins of fornication and idolatry: concerning which sins, note two things, first, where impenitency is forbidden: secondly, how great a sin it is. First, where it is forbidden. *Ans.* There are two parts of the word, the law and the Gospell, and these two be seuered and distinct, neither can be mingled one with the other. Now the law commands things, which we in that nature of man in which *Adam* was, could haue fulfilled: but the Gospell commaunds things about nature. The

Rom. 2.

law cannot command repentance, seeing it reuealeth not repentance: but the Gospell commaunds it, and so by an Euangelicall commaundement this sin is forbidden. As for the second part, how great this sinne is, know we, that when men liue and go on in their sins, it is a great sin, seeing by it men heape vp sinne and wrath to themselves. Some say it is a sin against the holy Ghost; but it is vntrue: for that is a blasphemy, so is not impenitency: that is in this life, but impenitency properly is at death.

Hence the Papists gather againe, that a man hath free will: seeing he gaue her time to repent, but she would not. *Ans.* She had free will to sinne, as all men haue, and so to be impenitent: but it followes not that she had free wil to do good, & to repent without Gods speciall grace.

That which Christ said of *Iesabel*, may be said of our Church, and most men among vs: he giueth vs long time to repent, ten, twenty, or thirty yeares; not one of a hundred repents, we care not to heare the word, and receiue the sacraments: we will not turne to God truly, but lie in sin, in ignorance, in contempt of the word, in prophanation of the Sabbath, couetousnesse, adultery, idlenesse, drinking, and eating; so that our liues tell plainly, not one of a thousand turnes to God truly.

Now Christ hauing reprobued the Church and *Iesabel*, from the 22. to the 28. verse, he giueth speciall counsell to them both. The end of his counsell is, to direct them how to auoide the iudgement of God, both in this and the life to come. The counsell of Christ hath two parts: the first concerneth the woman *Iesabel* and her company: the second, the Church of *Thyattira*.

The counsell concerning her, is in the 22. and 23. verses: the summe of it is to repent: thou *Iesabel* and thy company and disciples repent of your sins. This is not expresse, but in stead thereof is the reason, vers. 22. 23. The reason is this, If thou wilt not repent, I will punish thee with sundry iudgements: but thou wouldst not be punished with sundry iudgements, therefore repent.

Behold I will. This is the reason, in which note two parts: first, a threatning: secondly, an exception, except they repent of their

their workes.

Before the threatning Christ sets this note of attention. This should teach her & vs to consider seriously of iudgements against sin and sinners in the written word of God. *Iosias* when the law was read, his heart melted, which was at the threatnings of the law, 2. *King.* 24. So when *Peter* preached, the Iewes were pricked in heart, because he told them of the fearefull iudgement due to them for killing the Lord of life. *Act.* 2. 37. So should we with *Iosias* be humbled at the serious consideration of Gods threatnings against sin, and be moued to repent. And the cause why sin is so rife, is, because men thinke not earnestly, or else regard not Gods iudgements against sin and sinners.

The threatning hath three parts, according to three estates. The first concerning *Iesabel*: *I will cast her into a bed.* We may gather the meaning of these words by those (2. *Sam.* 13. 5.) of *Ionadab* to *Amnon*, *Ly down on thy bed, and faine thy self sick.* So here I will cast her into a bed, that is, strike her with some great sickness: the place, namely the bed, put for the sickness which is in the man lying on the bed. *Iesabel* tooke pleasure in the bed by fornication, who abusing the bed, the Lord to punish her in the bed accordingly, gaue her sickness in the same bed which she abused. Here is Gods dealing with sinners, he punisheth them in those things they haue abused. *Iesabel* abused the bed to fornication; the Lord punished her in the bed, with some great disease and sickness. *Dives* abused his tongue and tast in Gods creatures, & he is punished in them. *Luke* 16. he asked a drop of water to coole his tongue. Gamesters take pleasure in abusing time, and spend it in carding and dicing, their punishment it brings many iudgements on them, they come to ruine and misery. *Ahab* to get the vineyard, sheds blood, the Lord sheds his, *Iesabels*, and his childrens: and they which liue by the blood of the poore, & draw it out of them, are punished with the like, for blood will haue blood, and the Lord will punish men in those sins wherein they tooke most pleasure.

Then this should admonish vs to take heed we abuse no creature of God, for the Lord he will turne the same to our punishment.

I will cast her: That is, strike her with some grievous sicknes. Here we see the author of sicknes, it is not by chance, but comes from the hand of God: if men could learne this, they would make better vse of sicknes: if men could say, the Lord hath cast me on my bed, visited my body with sicknes, he hath done it for some of my sins, to humble me, and make me repent; then they would find in their recovery a blessing, and liue a new life. *Esay* 38. *Hezekiah* when he lay on his death bed, knew it came from the Lord, & therefore, hearing *Esay* say he must die, he turned him to the wall and wept, as for other things, so especially for his sins, and craued pardon for them. So *Jacob* lying on his bed, leaned on his staffe, fate vp and prayed for pardon of his sins, and to testifie his faith and hope to God. So should we in our sicknes shew our faith and hope, and pray for pardon of finnes committed against him.

The second part of the threatning, which concernes her disciples and followers, which receiued her doctrine, and committed fornication with her: and their punishment is to be cast into great affliction.

We see it is a great sin to commit fornication, and not a trick or slip of youth, as we call it, seeing Christ assignes a great punishment to it. Againe, we see some causes why townes, cities, and countries be afflicted with much famine, sword and pestilence: namely, because there be fornicators and maintainers of errors and superstition: for God sends these iudgements, as for other sins, so for fornication. Sodom was destroyed for this sin. And euen in our time, we haue plagues, famine, sword, many sicknesses, and that for this sin among the rest. *1. Cor. 11.* many were dead for this sin, lest they shold come defiled to the Lords table.

Now followes the exception: *Except they repent.* Here we see, all Gods iudgements and threatnings be with exception in the matter of saluation. And seeing Christ ads this exception, *vnlesse they repent:* we see men of yeares condemned in the Church, not so much for sin, as liuing in sin without repentance. Indeed the least sin makes a man subiect to condemnation, but lying in sin, that brings actual condemnation & the wrath of God vpon vs, so that if man commit sinne and lie in it, he casts his soule away.

To

To commit sinne, is not that which killeth vs, but to lye in sinne: for if a man sinne, and after repent, he shall haue mercie at Gods hands. Secondly, it is propounded in the midtt of the threatres: for they go before this exception, and come after. Where we see, God mingleth his mercie with iudgement, he sheweth not all iudgement, nor all mercie, but tempereth them together. Now, in that the Lord will bring iudgement on them wlesse they repent: we see that repentance preuenteth temporall iudgement. We haue had long peace, and haue abused it to commit sinne, now we must looke for Gods iudgements: and we see the Spaniard as a weapon of God, now the Lord may iustly bring him on vs. The best way to preuent this and al Gods iudgements, is, for high and low, and all estates to repent, and so the Lord will turne him away.

Of thy workes: namely, fornication & idolatrie. So we, if we wil repent, we must cease from our particular sins, as the drunkard from his drunkenesse, and to liue soberly, &c. For to say, I am sorie, and in generall to repent, as many men do, is but to make shew of repentance: but men must leaue each sinne, and do the contrarie vertue.

In the three and twentieth verse, is the third part of this threatening, *I will kill her child with death:* that is, such as be of her familie, and her children in fornication, not them which follow her doctrine, but properly, for they are reprobated before. *I will kill.* It had bene sufficient, to say so: but he addeth, *I will kill with death:* for the certaintie, largeness, and fulnesse of it, not sparing them. But the mother sinned, shall the child be punished for her sake? *Ans.* In temporall and bodily punishments it may be so, not in eternall punishments. Among men, if the father be a traitor, the Son is punished, and beareth the shame: then shall it not be equitie with God to punish the sonne for the fathers sinne in bodily punishment? And though there were no reason to vs; yet we should thinke it good with God. But there is reason sufficient, why the Lord should destroy cities, and commonwealths, and families, which be linked together by the bond of societie, and be members of the same familie. Now if one member sinne, the other may be punished: as in the

bodie, if the stomacke be sicke, the head feelth it: so when the father sinneth, the sonne may be punished: when the husband, the wife: when the Maister, the seruant: when the subiect, the magistrate: because of the mutuall relation, and nigh bond of societie betweene members of the same familie, citie, or kingdome. Is this so? then parents had need to take heed how they sinne: for they sinning, may bring iudgments and death on their familie or their children. Then are they cruell parents, which liue in sinne, not caring for their children, but by their sinnes bring Gods iudgements on them, and on their families. Let then euery man in the societie where he liueth, be carefull he sinne not: for then he may bring Gods iudgement on the place, especially, if he be a speciall member: as *Abab* on himselfe and his children, and *Dauid* on the whole people. Then all such as will not looke to themselues, but liue in sinne, should be banished out of all societies, vnlesse they will repent and be new men: seeing they do what they can to bring Gods iudgements on that place where they liue.

Verf. 24. That all Churches may know, that I am he, which searcheth the heart and reines.

Christ hauing propounded his threatening, here he goeth about to make it take place in them: in *Iesabell* and her company, by remouing of two carnall conceits, whereby they might thinke to illude and auoid Christs threatnings. For first, they might haue said, Our praetises and sinnes be secret, not knowne to men: therefore though God threaten, we shall escape the iudgements of God: but we are without the reach of them, they cannot take hold of vs. But Christ in the first words cuttieth off this first conception: Thogh you may perswade your selues you shall escape iudgement, seeing your sinnes be secret, yet I search the heart, and I will discover them to all Churches: they shall know that I search the heart, that is, I see and know the most hidden and secret thoughts and affections of the heart.

That all Churches. Christ will discover their sins, not to all the world, but to all Churches: and this he speaketh, to the end to terrifie *Iesabel* and her companie. For as it is a great honour to be approued and esteemed of all Churches, so it is a great disgrace

disgrace and dishonor to be euill thought of by the Churches of God. *Mat.* 18. That which is bound in earth by the church of God, is bound in heauen by God himselfe: so by proportion those which be euill thought of in Gods church, and in disgrace of it, they be in disgrace with God in heauen.

Seeing Christ speaketh this to terrifie *Iesabel* and her companie, we must labour in all things to be approued and esteemed of the Church: though we must approue our selues, as much as we can, to all, yet especially to the Church of God, and auoide all things which may bring any disgrace or dishonour to the Church: for as it is a great honor to be well esteemed of the Church, so it is a great dishonor to be il esteemed. *Ro.* 16. 1. *Cor.* 1. the last verse, *Paule* saith: *All the Churches salute you:*, not that all Churches send commendations by word of mouth: but, to confirme and comfort them, he saith, all true Churches planted by him, did approue of them: *Act.* 16. *Paul* approued of *Timothy*, and received him to him, because he was commended, and had the approbation of the Churches and brethren at *Lyconium* and *Lystra*. So must we haue the approbation of Gods Church, which is the approbation of God himselfe. But what would Christ haue all Churches to know? namely, *that I search the heart, &c.* In which words, by *heart* and *reines*, is meant the same thing: namely, by *reines*, is meant the thoughts and affections of men, and by *heart* is meant so much, as it is plaine in the old & new Testament. But how can these signifie thoughts and affections, seeing thoughts be in the braine, affections in the heart, neither of them in the reines? *Ans.* By resemblance: for as the reines be in the most secret and inward parts of the bodie: so thoughts be in the most hidden part of man; namely, his soule. So thoughts are said to be in the heart, because they haue operation in the heart, though they be placed in the brain. *Search*: that is, with such circumspection and diligence, as bringeth the finding out of that we seek. By this is signified, that Christ seeth not onely the outward actions, but the inward affections and motions, nothing, the most secret, is hidden from him.

We see by this, Christ is not onely man, but very God: for *Vs.*

1er. 7. 10. 11.

he which hath the true properie of God is very God; Christ hath, ergo. He which is God alone, can search the heart, the thoughts, motions, and inclinations of the heart: but Christ can, therefore he is true God, one person, consisting of two natures, the Godhead and manhood. Again, seeing Christ discerneth the heart, we must in all things take heed of hypocrisie, especially in matters of religion, when we seeme to be that outwardly, which indeed we are not inwardly: but we must looke that we be that in truth, and in heart, which we would seeme to the world: to be & draw nigh to God with our souls, as we do with our bodies, lips, words, and actions. For Christ is very God, seeth and searcheth our hearts, thoughts and affections: he looketh not so much to the outward, as the inward serving of him; we must worship him in spirit, seeing he is a Spirit. Besides, we must suspect our selves for vnknowne sins: for such is the depth of our corruption, that we cannot sound the bottome of it, neither can we thoroughly see the pronenesse of our nature to sinne and corruption. Therefore we must suspect our selves, euen of all finnes which we know not, and not excuse any finnes. So did *Dauid* (*Psalms*. 19.) after earnest search; as though he had said: Lord, I haue searched my heart, but I cannot sufficiently know mine owne corruptions, therefore, O Lord, forgiue me all mine vnknowne finnes. And if we could thus suspect our selves, we would better practise repentance, and liue with greater care; but ignorant persons, not able to search their corrupt hearts, they blesse themselves, and excuse themselves, nay, say they can keepe the whole law. Now Christ hauing cut off the first corrupt conceipt, preuenteth the second, wherby they might hinder and auoid his iudgement: for they might say, though the Lord send iudgments, yet we shall be safe, they shall not come nigh vs. Thus they, and every sinfull man doth say. *Esa.* 28. They in common iudgement, make a league with hell, saying Gods iudgements shall not come nigh them. This is a naturall corruption of our hearts, that in common iudgement we shall escape: and euery man liketh this.

Now Christ to cut off this corrupt conceipt, saith: *And will giue:* as if he had said: you may flatter your selves, thinke when

I send iudgement you shall escape: but I will giue to euery one (none excepted) according to his workes: therefore flatter your selues no more.

I will giue. That is, I will reward, partly in this life, and partly at the day of iudgement: for it is meant especially of the last iudgement. *Rom. 2. Ren. 20.* Hence the Papists gather, that men must be saued, not onely by faith, but workes, seeing God will reward good workes. *Ans. 1.* Their reason standeth thus: by that we are iudged, by the very same thing we are saued: but we are iudged by workes, therefore saued by workes. The flat-ma-ior is false: for we must distinguish betweene iudgement and iustification. To iudge, is to declare one iust by his signes, as his workes: to iustifie, is to make a man iust: in which we consider nothing but Christ, and our faith applying him to vs. So then we are iudged by workes, but not iustified neither saued by workes. *Ans. 2.* Christ saith not, I will giue for their workes: but I will giue them according to their workes, as their workes be, not for them; where he maketh workes an outward signe and rule, according to which he wil frame his iudgement, to declare men iust.

Seeing euery man must be iudged, that is, saued or condemned by his workes, then good workes are necessarie to saluation: for we must be iudged by our workes, and saued according to our workes, therefore they be necessarie: not as causes either efficient or helping any waies, but as fruites, effects, and signes of our faith, and markes in the way to heauen, which must direct vs to eternall life.

Seeing we shall be iudged in this life, but especially in the last day, by our workes, we must labour to abound in good workes; not to winne heauen by them, but to assure our selues we belong to Christ, and shall be truly vnited to him. Now all good workes, are either the works or duties of the morall law of God, or else they be those workes of our calling, both general as we be Christians, or particular in that calling God placeth vs, done in faith and loue, to Gods glorie, the good of others, and in obedience to God. These be good workes to God, though the calling be neuer so base: for which we shall be re-

warded, and according to which we shall be iudged and saued. Now contrarily, euil works they be euident signes of condénation: & look how many euil works we do, they be so many brands and markes of our soules, to shew we be the children of Satan.

Here we see there are degrees of glorie in heauen, and of punishment in hell: for he will reward euery one according to his works. Then they which haue abounded in good workes, they shall haue greater measure of glorie: the fewer works, the lesser glorie: so they which haue committed greatest sinnes, they shall haue greatest measure of punishment; they which lesse, lesse punishment in hell fire.

Vers. 24.

And vnto you I say. In this foure and twentieth verse, he cometh to the second part of his counsell to the Church and Angell of Thyatira: that is, the better sort of the Church.

But before the counsell, he setteth a preface: in which preface, note first, who speaketh: secondly, to whom: For the first, who speaketh: namely, *I*. Where Christ as doctour of the church challengeth to himselfe all supremacie, and sufficient authoritie ouer the Church: for all his Ministers come in his name, not in their owne: *The Lord saith, or Christ saith*. But Christ, he comes in his owne name: *I say*. Noting, he is the head Doctour and teacher of the Church, the fountaine and head of all doctrine deliuered to it. This Christ saith, to smite a reuerence in their harts, seeing this counsell is not deliuered to them by any man or Angell, but by Christ himselfe, who deliuered it to *John*. For the second: to whom he giueth counsell: namely, *you*: that is, generally: after he expoundeth this *you*, namely, to the rest of the Church of Thyatira, to the whole bodie and Angell of that Church, except *Iesabel* and her companie. Where note, Christ speaking to them, distinguisheth betweene persons, namely, the Church and her Angell, and *Iesabel* and her companie: so suitably he giueth his doctrine to them. Now he being the Doctour of the Church, teacheth his Ministers what to do: namely, to distinguish betweene man and man, doctrine and doctrine: not to deliuer euery part of the word to all men, but to deuide it aright, to giue to euery person, that which may be fit for him. But how must the word be deliuered to mixt congregations, where there

there be both weake and strong, Papiſts and Proteſtants, deſpairing and impenitent auditors? *Anſ.* We muſt imitate Chriſt, we muſt diſtinguiſh betweene perſons, and ſutably dire& our doctrine to them. Impenitent and hard hearted ſinners muſt haue threatnings, with exception of the penitent: hard hearted muſt haue no comfort but iudgement, with limitation to them which deſpaire, theſe cōforts with limitation of them which be impenitent. Now what is meant by this, *reſt of them*, Chriſt ſheweth: *And to as many as receiue not this learning.* Where he giueth two notes to know theſe *reſt* by. The firſt, they which had not this learning, which maintained not the doctrine of *Ieſabel* and her companie. The ſecond note: they which *haue not knowne the deepneſſe of Satan* (as they call it:) that is, which haue not approued, liked, withſtood, nor giuen their conſent to that depth of Satan: that is, that doctrine of *Ieſabel*, which they call and eſteeme to be deepe and profound learning: which theſe (though they know it) yet do not with knowledge approue it, which *Ieſabel* and her companie iudged profound learning, beyond the doctrine of the Prophets & Apoſtles. Of the firſt note I haue ſpoken before. In the ſecond note, we may marke a wicked practiſe of *Ieſabel* and her followers: they eſteemed their owne learning highly profound, but the doctrine of the Prophets and Apoſtles, that was no ſuch matter: an high concept of her owne falſe doctrine, but a baſe opinion of true Apoſtolicall doctrine: and this opinion hath bene in many heretikes. So the Iewes hold, that God gaue *Mofes* two doctrines: the firſt, was the written law, which was for the common people: the ſecond was a more ſecret doctrine, which *Mofes* had by reuelation, and ſo conueyed it to the Iewes, which they kept ſtill in the Cabbala. So the Papiſts thinke, the written word, but an inkie letter, a dead letter, or noſe of waxe: but the common conſent in the heart of all Chatholikes, that they take to be the true word of God, condemning the written word in the Prophets & Apoſtles. So the Anabaptiſts, they make the word of God written, to be milke for euery nouice, but the conſent of the heart among themſelues, that is the ſtrong meate. Nay, this opinion is in our Church: for we preferre the writings of men before the

word of God. For if a man expound a text by the word, gather doctrines according to the lawes of reason, this we call simple preaching: but if any bring in the authoritie of men, as Saint *Ambrose*, *Augustine*, with Latine or Greeke, this we take to be a learned kind of preaching, which is nothing else, but to magnifie the writings of men, to thinke highly of them, but to disgrace the word of God, thinke basely of it. Here Christ saith, I grant it is a profound *learning*, not of God, but of the diuell. Where we see, Christ alleaging this saying of *Isebel*, doth it with a disgrace: he saith, it is deepnesse and profoundnesse, but of the diuell: yea Christ saith not, it is profound indeed; but that it is *Isebel's* speech, as *they say*. Hence I gather, that Christian men cannot safely play stage playes, and Comedies of heathen and prophane men, for these be full of prophane and blasphemous oathes, and wicked sayings, against God and the morall law. Now if Christ alleaging but one word of a wicked woman, did it not without disgrace of her: how can Christian men not onely speake, but by lecture act, heathen and prophane Comedies?

As they speake. He addeth these words: first, to shew, that the words he alleaged before, were not his owne, but *Isebel's* and her scholers. Secondly, to shew the proud and presumptuous mind of them, in that they call their owne hereticall opinions, profound learning: which is a note of a false teacher, to vse swelling words, and great bragges: to make a faire shew. *Iude* vers. 16. 2. *Pet.* 2. But the doctrine of God is in humilitie both of spirit, and maner of teaching. The Lord teacheth his will to the contrite and humble man. *Psalms.* 25. 14.

Now followeth Christs counsell: *Though I lay no other burthen on you, yet I will haue you hold that still which I gaue you, to the end.* This distinction containeth two parts; *Though I lay no other, &c.* in the foure and twentieth verse: *yet I will, &c.* in the fife and twentieth verse. In the first part, Christ saith, *Though I haue punished Isebel*, left her on a bed; punished her children and familie; yet I will lay no burthen on thee, but onely that I reprove thee for the suffering of *Isebel*.

This Christ speaketh to comfort them, and all such as giue themselves.

themselves to maintaine sinceritie of life and of doctrine, for these shall be saued from common iudgements, and haue the Lords protection in commo afflictions: though I punish *Iesabel* and her company, yet when wicked men be punished in common destruction, you which study to maintaine sinceritie of doctrine and life, shall haue Gods protection in common iudgements.

Then it stands vs in hand to imitate the, to labor to maintaine sinceritie in doctrine, to defend truth in life and conuersation, to make conscience of all sin. If we labour to obey the Lord in all things, to keepe sincere hearts, then in common iudgements though *Iesabel* and her company, yea all wicked persons be punished, it shall not touch vs, we shall find Gods mercie and protection, our punishment shall be onely reproofe for some defectio in vs. But if we maintaine falshood in doctrine, liue loosely, not making conscience of sin, then Gods iudgements shall take hold of vs, and afflict vs.

But that which you haue already, hold fast till I come. After the Verse. 25. preface followes the summe of the counsell of Christ to the Angell and Church of Thyatira, which stands in a distinction, though I will lay no burden on thee, yet I wil haue you hold fast, &c. the first part is in the 24. verse, the second part in these words, as before I said.

That which you haue receiued. That is, that which my Apostles and Prophets haue taught you, that doctrine of saluation they haue deliuered you, hold that fast with both hands, till I come to iudgement at the last day. Before Christ commended this Church for not approving the false doctrine of *Iesabel*, but here he commands her to embrace the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles.

Hence we see, Christ would haue this Church to embrace the doctrine taught by his Apostles, to maintaine that, and not to regard any other, but though an Angell from heauen did preach any other doctrine, he should be accursed. *Galat. 1.*

By this we may iudge of the maine religions which be in the world, namely, of the Turkes, Jewes, and Papists. The Papists

magnifie their religion standing on unwritten traditions; but they cannot proue they be Apostolical, *ergo* we must not regard them no, nor doctrines which men say they haue by reuelation, for we must onely regard Apostolicall doctrine. As for the Turkes religion, it was not the Apostles preaching, but crept in six hundred yeares after them. And for the Iewes, all their religio is against the Gospel. Then good men in diuers countries shold not be of diuers religions, but they should embrace the doctrine taught by the Prophets and Apostles of Christ: neither should men because of dissent in religion, be of no religion: for Christ inioynes this Church to maintaine the doctrine of the Apostles, though many discented from it.

Hold fast to the end. Here note how long, not one or two dayes, but to the end, and we must looke to this, seeing Christ so straightly commands it, because this is the foundation and mark of true religion, and the readie way to saue mens soules, to be constant to the end: and for this (2.Tim.2.) Paul bids him teach that he learned, that others might instruct them which follow, and so conuey it from age to age: and for this the Church is called the ground and pillar of truth. And so the Lord (Eph.4.) giueth the Church Pastors: first, such as by their teaching maintaine puritie in maners, and teachers which maintaine it in doctrine. Then this is the Churches dutie, to continue puritie of religion to the end of the world. If the marke be set wrong in the haue, it is enough to cast away all the ships: so if the puritie of doctrine be corrupt, which is the direction of our soules to heauen, then we shall make shipwracke of our soules in hell. Then the Ministers must not onely teach truly, but labour to beate downe false doctrine which poisons the doctrine of the Gospel. And because men labour not to maintaine the puritie of religion and true doctrine, the Lord (2.Theff.2.) giueth them vp to beleue lies and fantasies of men.

To him which overcometh, &c. In these words is the last part, to wit, the conclusion of the Epistle containing two parts: first, a promise: secondly, a commaundement. In the promise, note two things: first the parties to whom: secondly, the benefits promised. The partie to whom, *to him which overcometh*: whom here

here Christ describes to be, *he which keepes his workes, by his practise of obedience.*

He which keepes or obserues. This is the forme of obedience, namely the obseruing of the workes of Christ, which is not a keeping of them according to the rigour of the law, but a constant purpose and indeuour to keepe them: for the children of God haue this priuiledge, that their will and indeuour is accepted of God for the deed in Christ Iesus. There are many which haue litle knowledge, these must not be cast downe, but if they haue a desire and indeuour to liue according to the will of Christ, making conscience of sinne, their obedience is true obedience, and acceptable to Christ.

My workes. Here is the matter of obedience, namely Christs workes: that is, such workes as Christ hath ordained in his word by his spirit, and is the author of in his members.

Christ calls these workes *his workes*, therefore we must not *Vsc. 1.* thinke or speake, or do our words or workes, but onely Christs workes, commanded and ordained in his word, and caused in vs by his spirit: which we do when we conforme our workes and wils, to his word and will.

We see no worke is acceptable to God, which is not ordered *Vsc. 2.* by Christs word, though we think highly of it. *Esay. 6.* he repro- ueth them for teaching the feare of God by mens comandemēt. This condemnes the Turkes, Papists, and Iewes religion, which are not workes of Christ but of sinfull men, standing in praying to Saints, fasting, vowing, Masses, &c.

My workes: Not one or two workes, but all my workes: the creature must obey Christ, not in some, but absolutely in all things: he will not part stakes, but wil haue all or none. *Dauid* (*Psal. 119.*) conformed himselfe to the whole law. So *H Ezekiah* he turned to all the law of *Moses*.

Unto the end. Here we see, Christ will haue our obedience to *Vsc.* be constant, &c. we must not iudge of obedience by one or two actions, but by the course of a mans life: if his life hath bene good, with conscience of sinne, then his obedience is good. For say a man by reason of sicknesse, rage and raue at his death, yet if he haue liued well, and made conscience of sinne, we must not

iudge of him by that fit. Now the benefits promised are two: first, power to rule: secondly, the morning starre. *I will giue him power which I haue receiued of my father.* These words must be referred to the words, not following but before. For the better vnderstanding of them, two questions are necessary: first, what is the power of the Mediator: secondly, how farre he conueyeth power to his seruants. For the first, the power of Christ as he is Mediator is great, and described by three arguments: first, to rule ouer nations: here is the largenesse of it, for Christ hath power ouer all men, all countries and kingdomes in the whole world are in his hand. Secondly, it is soueraigne and absolute, ruling and ouerruling all creatures, ouerruled of none. This soueraigntie stands in two things, first, that he giueth lawes that binde the conscience, so that if men keepe them not, he hath power to condemne them: nay he ruleth mens wils and affections, he can make them obey him in spite of their hearts. Secondly, in that he hath this power of himself and from himself. *Ren. 3.* he hath the keyes of heauen and hel, *Psal. 2.* he can breake them in peeces as a potters vessell. Thirdly, he receiues it from his father, as he is God he is equall to his father, yet as he is Mediator, he receiue it from him: thus is his power generall, soueraigne, and absolute. To come to the second question. How farre this power is ours, and imparted to vs. *Ans.* The generall soueraigne power of Christ is not giuen to vs, or to any creature, but to him who is God and man; it is incommunicable to any creature, and proper to the person of Christ.

Then Christ speaketh these words, not to shew that his absolute & soueraigne power is giuen to vs: but because his creatures haue the benefit of it, the full comfort and saluation of the elect cometh from it, they haue fruite of it, in that they partake with him in his glory in heauen. *Ephes. 2. 7.* *2. Cor. 6.* the Saints shall iudge the world, that is, shall be witnesses and approuers of Christs sentence, not that they shall haue power to giue iudgement, but they shall be caught vp first, and he giuing sentence, they sitting by him shall approue it. Secondly he giueth vs this power, because he by this inables his in their owne person to ouercome sin, the world, and their owne corruption.

By

By this we see our dignitie, every seruant of God hath power ouer nations, ouer the world, to rule and breake them in peeces, to iudge and condemne them. Is this our priuiledge? then we had need to take heed of all sinne, for we cannot condemne other men off sin, and be guiltie of sin our selues. For it is a great disgrace for a Iudge to condemne a malefactor of murther or theft, and be guiltie himselfe. So Christ, if we be full of sinne, and make no cōscience of it, he wil neuer let vs sit to iudge the world with himselfe. Then seeing we are Kings, Iudges, and haue such priuiledges, we must looke to our selues. Again, this is our comfort in persecution, if thou be the child of God, thou art a King, a Iudge, though thou be now poore, abused and persecuted, yet the time cometh when thou shalt iudge and condemne thy persecutors, and be auenged of them.

And rule the nations, as a shepheard ruleth his sheepe: that is, to gouerne and feed them, *Iohn 21. Feed my lambs*, that is, feed and rule. Hence the Papiſts gather, *Peter* was the generall Bishop to guide and feed Christs sheepe, that is the world: but then euery Christian should be a Pope, for euery one hath power to rule the nations ouer the whole world: but none will say, euery one should haue so large authoritie: then it is not meant of supremacie. Further, from this place the Papiſts gather, that Saints be patrons of countries and kingdomes: secondly, that we may pray to Saints in heauen, for (say they) they haue rule of nations, *ergo* they know them and what they do. But they abuse the text, for it is not said, any Christian shall rule ouer one nation, but ouer all indefinitely: neither do they rule as Christ, but as hauing benefit of his power. Again, both their collectiōs are bad, for by *nations*, here is not meant any country or kingdome, but the wicked onely, they haue rule ouer, not all nations simply, but wicked men and vnbeleeuers.

And I will giue him the morning starre. Here is the second benefit promised by Christ to him which ouercometh, namely the morning starre, with all the benefits which come thereby. The morning starre is that starre which riseth before the Sunne some time of the yeare, and by heathen men is called *Venus*, which in deed is Christ himselfe. *Rev. 22. 16*. Now Christ is called a *star*,

first because he illuminates mens wils and vnderstandings in things belonging to saluation: secondly, to shew that the prophesie of *Balaam* (*Num. 24.*) is now in the new Testament fulfilled; for now Christ hath by his Apostles reuealed himselfe plentifully to all nations. Againe, he is called the *morning starre*, for speciall resemblance: for that starre riseth not at midnight, or in the beginning of the night, but in the morning, in the beginning of the day, and then shineth brighter then all the rest. So Christ the true morning starre, came not in the beginning of the world, or in the midst of it, but in the latter age, he came in the new testament, and fulnesse of time, and now he reuealeth his will more fully then euer in the old testament. 2. *Pet.* 1.9. Christ then is called this morning starre, for in the old testament they had darknesse and candlelight, but now Christ shineth out brightly.

I will giue him. Here is a promise of two benefits, first perfect illumination and lightning, whereby all ignorance shall be dispelled after this life, and men shall then so farre know God as mans nature can comprehend. The second benefit is the light of glory, not onely of knowledge but perfect glory, for by fellowship of this glory of Christ, we shal be made like Saints and Angels, shining starres in the kingdome of heauen.

Vse. 1. Seeing Christ is a starre, we see how they be deceiued which liue in sin and ignorance, without good conscience, in pleasure and securitie, and yet they thinke they belong to Christ, they haue the true light: but such as liue in blindnesse, neuer seeking to know Gods will & obey him, these are in darknesse, haue no light in Christ: for what fellowship is there betwixt light and darknesse?

Vse. 2. We must follow *Peters* rule, first labour to haue this starre to shine in our hearts, which is, when we vse meanes to haue the beames of this Sun to shine on vs, to get knowledge in the mystery of our saluation by Christ, to haue this Sun of righteousnes to lighten our minds, and withall to warme and refresh our dead soules, as the sun in the spring reuiues all things which seemed dead. We must set open the doores of our hearts, and entertaine this comfortable light.

Seeing

Seeing Christ is the morning starre, not that shines in the night, but in the morning, in the day time, we must labor to leade our liues in godlinesse and sobrietie, as children of the light. *Rom. 13. 12.* and if we will not walk in this light, it shall be taken from vs, and we shall be cast into eternall darknesse.

Let him which hath an eare. Here is the second part of the conclusion: but of this often before.

CHAP. III.

VERSE I.

And to the Angell of the Church of Sardis, &c.



HIS is the fift particular commandement to *Iohn*: that he should write an Epistle to that great and famous citie of Sardis.

The Epistle hath three parts: first, a Preface: secondly, body or substance: thirdly, a conclusion. First, the Preface sheweth in whose name the Epistle was written, to giue it the more authoritie. It containeth a liuely description of Christ in his kingly office, as he is the foueraigne head of his Church, and that in two royalties and priuiledges: first, in that he hath the seuen spirits: secondly, the seuen starres. For the first, I shewed what it meaneth, chap. i. vers. 4. namely, the holy Ghost, who is the author of all grace: so that to haue the seuen spirits, is as much as to say, he had the holy Ghost. *Ob.* All Gods seruants haue the holy Ghost, therefore that is no peculiar priuiledge of Christ. *Ans.* True, but not in the same maner: for Christ had it two wayes: first, in regard of his Deitie: secondly, of his humanitie. First, as he is God, he hath in him the beginning of the holy Ghost: for the holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Sonne. Therefore Christ is said to send the holy Ghost, and to worke by him: and whatsoeuer he doth in the Church, he doth it by him, and for that cause Christ is said to haue the seuen spirits. Secondly,

in regard of his manhood: because the holy Ghost hath powered forth into his manhood the perfection of all graces and gifts whatsoever, as he is annointed with the oyle of gladnesse aboute his fellowes.

And this perfection standeth in two things: first, in number: secondly, in degree or measure. First, in number thus: Among Gods seruants some haue these graces, some those; none haue all: but Christ hath all the graces which all men and Angels haue, & more too. Secondly, in degree: for the graces of Christ are more in measure, then all the graces of all the Saints and seruants of God whatsoever: he hath the fountaine of all grace, and therefore he is said to haue the Spirit without measure. And for that cause also Christ is said to haue the seuen spirits. This is spoken by occasion of the Church and people of Sardis, which was a dead people, and therefore Christ was able to quicken them, and to put life and spirit into them.

vs. That no man can haue fellowship with the Father, or the holy Ghost but by Christ; it is manifest by other places: *No man can come to the Father but by me*: so there must be a participation with Christ, before there can be any with the holy Ghost.

This serueth for our instruction, because among the Papists there be many great learned men, which haue excellent gifts of nature, wit, memorie, and vnderstanding: and though they haue withall a reformed and ciuill life, yet they want faith and regeneration. How cometh this to passe? that such worthy men hauing the common gifts of the spirit, want the speciall? The cause is this: their Christ is a false Christ, yea an idol Christ: they professe the want of sauing faith, and all is, because they want Christ. Therefore no maruell though you see the greatest learned there, mocke and scoffe at this speciall grace of the assurance of our election. Againe, many among vs looke to be saued by Christ, and yet you shall see no grace, neither of knowledge, nor faith, feare nor care to keepe Gods commandements or a good conscience, no sparke of grace, and yet looke to be saued by Christ. How can these stand together? Though they say they haue Christ, they deceiue themselves: for they haue not the graces of the Spirit, and they haue no grace, because they

are not in Christ: and by that they may know they are not in Christ, because they haue no grace. To conclude then, we must all be admonished to labour that we may be vnited to Christ our head truly, to haue fellowship with him, that in him we may haue fellowship with the Father and the holy Ghost. No grace of God to life eternall will be bestowed vpon vs, till we haue Christ himselfe. Therefore first labour to be in Christ, and to be truly ioyned and vnited to him by the bond of faith, that by this meanes we may haue all graces distilling and flowing into our hearts by Christ.

Now the second royaltie is, he hath *seue starres*: that is, the Ministers and Pastors of the seuen Churches. Christ is said here to haue them, because he is the soueraigne Lord ouer them: he is an absolute Lord ouer all. For he setteth them apart, and giueth them whatsoeuer gifts they haue: he appointeth them their offices, duties, and callings; so as he hath rule ouer them, he appointeth, ordaineth, maketh and preserueth them. As he hath in him the fulnesse of spirit, so is he a Lord ouer his Ministers, he hath power to saue if they obey; or to destroy, if they rebell. *Ob.* The Church maketh Ministers. *Ans.* The right of making Ministers and ordaining them, is Christs royaltie, and belongeth to him, the Church doth but testifie and declare who they be that Christ maketh Ministers, and approueth them: therefore he saith here, the seuen starres be his. Now the end of these words is to strike the heart of the Minister which is secure and negligent, to make him know himselfe and his place, that he may begin to haue sound conscience of his dutie. And this point is an excellent motiue to make them looke to their dutie: their gifts are not their owne, nay they themselues are not their owne, but Christs; and he is their Lord. This very consideration cannot but be effectually to stirre vp all pastors to regard their duties: for seeing they are Christs, they must not do their owne will. We must renounce our selues in all things, and therefore bethinke our selues: our soules and our bodies, are not our owne but Christs.

Let this consideration draw vs on to do, thinke, and speake nothing, but that which Christ would: if he will haue you liue,

be content, because he is the Lord of your life; if to dye, be content, because you are his, and not your owne. So much for the Preface.

Now followeth the second part of the Epistle containing two parts: first, a reproofe: secondly, a promise. The reproofe in the first verse: *I know thy work*; in which is contained a reproof, and withall a remedie in the next words: *I know*. Here note the vice, and withall the reproofe: the vice is hypocrisie; for she pretended religion in outward shew, but wanted it indeed. *Thou hast a name*: that is, the Churches about thee iudge thee to liue, that is, to be borne anew, beleue in Christ, & to haue his spirit to guide thee: but thou art dead in sinnes, and wastest newnesse of life and regeneration. The like we may say of many great Churches: by name, the Romish Church, which though it seeme to liue, yet in regard of spirituall life it is dead. It pretendeth to be the true Church of Christ, but in truth it is dead in sinne. Yet some say, it is not dead, but diseased, full of sores and sicknesses; and though the throat be cut, yet it breatheth and panteth: but the truth is, it is starke dead and cold, it hath no spirituall life at all. But some alleage the contrarie, saying, it hath the Sacraments in it; and where there is a Sacrament, there is a Church: but they haue Baptisme, therefore a Church. *Ans.* Baptisme is not alwaies a note of a true Church: for the Samaritanes had circumcision, which was before Baptisme, yet they were no people nor church of God. *Of.* 1.9. That there may be baptisme & yet no church, it appeareth, because there may be baptisme without the preaching of the word. As the Papists haue baptisme without the true preaching of the word: so they haue the outward Baptisme, but deny the inward Baptisme, which is iustification by Christ, and sanctification by his Spirit. Again I answer, it is a Sacrament, not to that church of the Papists, but to the hiddē church in popery: for the Lord euer hath his church among them, he keepeth among them euen 7. thousand which neuer worshipped their idols. Now then, that Sacrament is reserued in that church, not for the Papists, but for Gods children among them. By this we see Gods owne prouidence, to call them by those meanes, and for their sakes he reserueth

serueth the word and Sacraments among them. But they say, Antichrist sitteth in the middest of Gods temple: but Antichrist as we say, is in the Romish church: therefore that is the temple of God. *Ans.* The true Church of God is among them, but it is hidden. Now he sitteth in the midst of them, not as a member but as an vsurper, theefe and deceiuer: for the Church of God is in their Church, as wheate among chaffe, and gold in drosse. And the like may be said, though not in regard of doctrine, yet in regard of life, of al our greatest townes in England, for the body of them they seeme to liue, if we looke on their outward seruice of God and shew, yet indeed they be dead, which appeareth by the common sinnes now in prosperitie, as pride inward and outward, fulnesse of bread, carelesnesse in religion: though we haue now the word plentifully preached, yet we seeming to liue are stark dead. Yet the Lord hath his church amongst vs, but the body of our people though they haue the word preached, yet they will not be reformed. But as a father which cannot reforme his sonne by words, must vse the rod: so the Lord when as the preaching of the word will not serue, he must needs take the rod in his hand, to make vs obey his will, to reform our liues, to trie which be his own childre, & which not. Christ before called these seuen churches his true church, yet here we see this church hath corruptions in it: so that a church may haue corruption in opinion and doctrine, and yet if it erre not in fundamentall points, it may be the true church of God, and we must not condemne a church for corruptions in it.

Thou hast a name. Other churches iudged of this church by the rule of charity: seeing them to make shew of religion, and to professe the Gospell, they iudged it to be a true church. So must we, so long as we see men liue outwardly in the feare of God, professe religion, iudge of the in charitie, til we see some euident signe, and commit secret iudgement to God. We see all infants are not the children of God, yet we admit all, iudge wel of them in charitie, coming of beleeuing parents; and *Paul* calleth all the churches he wrote vnto elect, by the rule of charitie, condemning none till God made them manifest.

But thou art dead. The churches about iudged her to liue, but

Christ's iudgement is, thou art dead: then we must regard especially the iudgement of Christ, and not care so much to be approved of the church (though that be good) as to be approved of Christ, which cannot erre: for though the church approve and commend vs, if Christ approve vs not, our estate is miserable.

Verse. 2. Be awake and strengthen the things ready to die. After the reproofe followeth first the remedy, secondly, the reason. In the remedy, note two duties: first, to be watchfull: secondly, to confirme the graces of God decayed in them. In that first he commaunds them to be watchfull, we see it is an excellent dutie; and then is a man watchfull when he hath great circumspection and heedinesse in respect of the salvation of his soule. This dutie concerneth two things, namely sin and death: for we are commanded in the word to watch against these two. Against sin in two things: first, for a man to bethinke himselfe of all the sins he may fall into; to do this, he must consider, first his nature, secondly his calling. First his nature, that there is in it the seed of all sinne, *ergo* he may fall into all sin: secondly, a man shall find that he is more inclined to one sinne then to another, and against that he must labour most. Secondly, for his calling, we must know that every calling hath his sinnes since the fall of man. Now a man must consider which be the especial sinnes of his calling, and when a man seeth them, he shall know by these two into what sins he may fall, and against them he must watch. Another thing is, to keepe the heart that it be not tainted with any sinne. *Pro. 4. 24.* about all watch and ward, keepe thy heart, that is, vse all good meanes to keepe thy heart cleane from all sinne.

The second part of watchfulnesse is in death, against the coming of Christ at iudgement vnto vs, or in particular by death, in which note two things: first, to bethinke our selues of Christs coming to iudgement, or to come to vs in particular, and in this regard we must make account that every day is the day wherein Christ will come, either in generall or particular iudgement. The second dutie is, to prepare our selues against Christs coming, to make vs ready to die every houre, as if Christ would come

come euen this day, so to morrow, and euery day. That we may do this, we must vse sobrietic and temperancie in all the things of this life, moderately to vse them, not to be drowned with the pleasures & profits of this life: for we the forget the time of death. And as Christ prescribeth the remedie to Sardis, so to vs: we are not better then they: we take great care to prepare for the dangers of this life. If a towne were in danger to be sacked, or a house to be robbed, we would set watch and ward to guard the, how much more shold we watch for the saluation of our soules, and not hazard them at death for want of watchfulnesse? The second reason to moue vs to watch, is the want of watchfulnesse, and securitie, which is the fore-runner of destruction. *1. Thes. 5. 3. When men cry peace, shen cometh destruction. Luk. 12.* When the rich man thought all was safe, then came destruction, and his soule was taken from him. When the old world thought nothing, then came the floud and swept them away. This shoud admonish vs to take heed to prepare our selues, and watch both against sinne and death, vnlesse we will cast away our soules.

And strengthen. Here is the second dutie, which is the reforming of the decayed graces. As if he should say, thou hast had many graces, whereof diuerse are lost, and many are fore decayed, therefore labour to recouer and strengthen them. Where Christ teacheth vs, that if we haue any gift of God, we must labour to preferue it, and not onely that, but to increase and grow on, and strengthen it: we must not stand in one estate, but increase in good workes, that we may become perfect men in Christ, by growing in grace as in dayes: for our gifts are not our owne but Gods, we are his stewards, he looketh to haue his owne with aduantage, else we are vnprofitable seruants. Then we must stirre vp the gifts of God in vs: and to do so, we must often and daily reade the Scriptures, daily heare them and meditate on the, vse the Sacraments often, vse often prayer and inuocation, and strue daily against our owne corruptions, and withall stirre vp our hearts to good things, and to true obedience. *Psal. 119.* David saith: I haue inclined my heart, euen my dead heart, and put life into it: and so we must put life into our benumbed soules, and often call on them which are halfe dead.

But we commonly stand still, seeke not to grow, but stand at a stay. Christ by these words would signifie, that some be dead, other graces be readie to die: whence we haue answer to that question, whether grace may be vtterly lost? We say some graces may, other some cannot be lost, but sore decayed and diminished. For Gods graces are of two sorts: some necessarie to saluation, as faith and regeneration: some are lesse necessarie, which go not with sauing faith: as sensible and full feeling of Gods fauour, ioy in the holy Ghost, earnest inuocation on Gods name. Now these may be separated from faith, and be wholly lost in the seruants of God for a time: the other cannot, though they may be sore diminished: nay, faith and regeneration considered in theselues, may be lost wholly: for nothing is vnchangeable in it owne nature, but God. The grace by which the elect Angels stand, is in it selfe changeable, and these would perish and come to nothing vlesse they were continually preserved, kept and confirmed in vs and them. If this be so, why then do not the elect fall away? *Ans.* Not because they haue faith and regeneration, or that they be in themselves vnchangeable, but because of Gods promises: as *Mar. 16.* Christ saith, that *the gates of hell,* (though they shew their violence,) *shall not preuaile against Peters faith:* so that these graces are eternall, not of theselues, but by Gods promise, which will preserve them to the end. Now seeing grace may be lost, we must not be too confident, if we haue any grace in vs, but worke out our saluation with feare and trembling: for they may come to that ebbe, that they may be at the point of death.

vs.

Now followeth the reason of the remedie: *For I haue not found, &c.* therefore watch and seeke to restore thy decayed graces. *I haue not found.* Here Christ signifieth, that he made a search in this Church, and that to reward them either with life or death. And so this was the practise of Christ when he came to Sodom, he went downe to search it. So *Gen. 11.* the Lord came downe to see Babel: the like is, *Ierem. 9.* *And the Lord he visiteth,* that is, he enquireth of the sinnes of the fathers in the children, and if he find them, he punisheth them in the children. And alwaies Christ first maketh inquirie; and after search made, he rewardeth

accor-

accordingly. The like will Christ do with vs, therefore we must labour to be such as he may approue of. If a Magistrate were to search our houses, we would see that nothing should be amisse: how much more when Christ the heavenly Prince (which searcheth the heart, and cannot be deceiued) cometh to search vs, that he may approue of vs and reward vs?

But found thee not perfect. There is a twofold perfection: one of the law, another of the Gospell. Of the law, when we satisfie the whole law: of the Gospell, when our workes done proceed from a beleeuing heart, which is carefull to please God in all things. Now though no worke of man be perfect, yet those workes coming from a heart full of faith are perfect in Christ, God accepting the will and indeuour for the deed, through Christ.

Christ he searched, and found in this church many goodly works, in shew only: for they were full of hypocrisie, made shew of godlinesse, but wanted the power thereof, neither did they come from an heart full of faith, or that indeuoured to please God, not to sinne in any thing: therefore they were not perfect and pleasing to God. In that this church is reprov'd, not for want of workes, and those faire in shew, but because they proceeded not from a beleeuing and honest heart; learne to pray as *Dauid, Psal. 119. 80. Lord, let my heart be upright*, let me giue all diligence to please thee in all things. This is a great comfort when one can say in his conscience, My heart is vpright: but hypocrisie is the killing of the soule.

Before God. Christ seemeth to distinguish himselfe from God. But he speaketh not of God simply, but of the Father, and of himselfe as he is the Mediator, and so is inferiour to the Father, though he be now in glorie. Now seeing he is in heauen, and in glorie there, yet carieth himselfe as Mediator, we may pray to him, without helpe of Angell or Saint, and it is no presumption, seeing he is still by his owne confession Mediator, and so carieth himselfe toward vs.

Remember. Here, after the remedie, Christ as a good Pastour of the soule, sheweth how to vse the same: namely, first, remember: secondly, hold fast: thirdly, repent. In practising of which

three, standeth the remedie of hypocrisie. *Remember*: that is, call to mind the doctrine of saluation taught by my Apostles. This remembrance is a most excellent dutie, and bringeth with it many graces, as subiection to Gods will, repentance, &c. *Psal.* 73. *Dauid* seeing the prosperitie of the wicked, had almost slipped, and was sore tempted: he could not be rid of his temptation, till he went into the sanctuary of God: that is, till he knew the word of God, *Psal.* 119. 55. He kept the commaundement of God, because he remembered his name in the night season. *Peter* remembered Christs words, and so repented at the crowing of a cocke, *Luk.* 23. And indeed, the cause of all sinne, is forgetfulness of the word of God. Therefore *Heb.* 6. every sinne is called ignorance, because we commit sinne, not remembering and knowing Gods word: and if we could keep in lively memorie the word of God, it were not possible that we should sin as we do. Then it is a most excellent meanes to cut off sinne, to haue the word of God running in our minds, forbidding sinne in vs. And the Diuell he laboureth about all things to make vs forget the word, for then he can draw vs easily to sinne. Now that we may haue the word continually in memorie, we must labour to haue our hearts affected with the same: for we cannot remember more then we like and affect. Then we must beleue it, else we cannot remember: for that we beleue not, slippeth soone out of our memorie. And the cause why so few remember the word, is, because they be not affected and delighted with it, nor beleue it.

That thou hast heard and receiued. That is, that doctrine which by hearing and receiuing thou hast learned. Seeing he puts hearing and receiuing together, we gather that this is the ordinary meanes of saluation, to heare and receiue the word preached.

- Ps.* 1. Then God calleth not all men in all times, seeing men in all ages haue not heard the word, neither receiued it: and if they haue not heard the doctrine of saluation by Christ in all ages, they could not be called; for first they must heare, and then be called. In this last age only the word is sent to all nations: it was not so in former ages. Again, false it is that God giueth grace generally to all men, so that every particular man hath grace offered to saluation

uation if he wil receiue it: but God gaue not the word to all: for all haue not heard, therefore they could not haue grace.

The second dutie is, *to hold fast*: this signifieth two things: first to maintaine the doctrine taught by the Apostles, and receiued of them: secondly, to practise the same in their life: but of these before.

The third dutie is, *to repent*: that is, though she repented before, yet she must restore and renew her repentance. Hence we learne, that we must not only begin, but often renew our repentance, and not onely for great sins, but for little slips and defects in grace, as dulnesse of heart, want of zeale, coldnes in practise of religion, &c. Now because this Church was ready to die, Christ addeth a reason, to put life into her, if she haue any grace. *If thou wilt not, I will come on thee as a theefe*: A most terrible threatning: if thou wilt not renew thy repentance, restore that grace decayed in thee, *I will come as a theefe suddenly*, and with speedy destruction, that thou shalt haue no time or way to escape it. Note here, that this threatning is not absolute, but with condition, and it is the most terrible commination in the whole word of God, where Christ threatneth to powre out his whole wrath on a Church, so as they shall haue no time or meanes to escape it.

Then we hauing the same sin that she had, being dead in security by reason of our long prosperity, we had need of this admonition to moue vs to watchfulnesse, to restore Gods graces decayed in vs: yet it seemes we make light account of all these things. If a man had any sparke of grace this would stirre him vp, but if this most fearefull commination will not moue vs, then the end of all must needs follow, euen the heavy wrath and iudgement of God must lay hold on vs, and cast vs into eternall destruction, where is no hope of helpe, for then a man might haue some comfort, if after a long time she should get out, but he must liue there for euer: without al end of paine: when he hath bin there a thousand yeare his paine is still as great and as much, nay no end he can haue. Then we must awake from our sins, repent for our sins, our securitie, dulnesse and coldnes in religion, stirre vp the graces of God in vs, shake off our ignorance; and

that because against these sins Christ giueth out this most terrible and fearefull commination.

Vers. 4. Notwithstanding thou hast a few names. Before Christ had reprov'd this church of hy pocrisie, now he commends her for a few which professe his name among them. But Christ had said before, that the church was dead: how then can this be a true church? *Ans.* Though the body of the Church were dead in sin, yet a few, some of them were true beleeuers, and testified their faith in obedience.

Out of this coherence we haue two instructions to learne: first, that a particular church and congregation, is called a church in regard of the better sort and part, and those which beleue in Christ, and haue the priuiledges: also in regard of the better part which beleue: for the Catholicke Church is a number of men on earth beleeuing in Christ. Now the particular church is a member of the Catholicke Church, so farre as they beleue in Christ. Those which beleue not, are no part of the true church: but as bad humors in the body are no true parts of the body, so these are no true parts of the Church. Secondly, we see a distinction betweene man and man in this church, though all be called, yet some called be dead, some aliue in Christ, and continue so. Now the cause of this distinction is, not from the will of man, but from the good pleasure of God, *Rom. 11. 4.* The whole body of the Israelites fell to idolatry, yet the Lord had seuen thousand which bowed not the knee to *Baal*. What is the cause of this? not the will of man: but I haue reserued seuen thousand which haue not bowed to *Baal*, saith the Lord. So then his will and good pleasure is the cause why some stand and some fall. So the cause why some in this church of Sardis liued, some were dead, is because the Lord in his good pleasure left some to themselues, and to other some he gaue his spirit. This, as before, confutes vniuersall grace, which derogates much from the grace of God. For this, why some stand, some fall, comes from and higher cause, euen from the power and will of God, which leaueth some to themselues, and inableth some to stand by his spirit.

Thou hast a few names. Here is the commendation of the

the better part of the church, there be yet a few persons knowne to me by their names, *which haue not defiled their garments.* Here he alludeth to the ceremoniall law, for the Lord in the ceremoniall law, made a distinction betweene things cleane and vncleane, not in themselues, but by his appointment. Now among the Iewes, if a man with his hand or garment touched a thing vncleane, he was defiled: which ceremony signified to them, that they should abstaine not onely from sin, but all appearance of euill, in that they might not touch any vncleane thing, no not with their garments. Then here Christ would shew there were sundry in Sardis, which did abstain both from sin and all occasions, shews, and appearances of sin: though the body of the church were dead, yet many in Sardis made such conscience of sin, that they auoided the very occasions of sinne.

Hence we see, that the seruants of God be few in number, the bodie of the church is dead in sin; but a few be so far fro sin, that they defile not their garments, that is, auoid all occasions of sin. Christ prepareth the kingdome of heauen for a litle flocke, *Esay* saith, only the best part of the Iewes must be saued, the rest hardened: and the way to hell is broad and easie, and many runne that way; the way to heauen is contrary. *Mark. 7. 7.* Then seeing the seruants of God be few, we must not follow the multitude: but this sin carieth many a man to hell, and to sin, when men desire to do as the most do, to liue as the most liue; we must rather follow the litle flocke of Christ, and not runne after the multitude.

A few names. That is, persons knowne to Christ by their particular names: they be called *names*, because Christ writeth their names in a bill. Then we see Christ knoweth his seruants particularly by their names: *Luke 10.* he knoweth all our haire, much more our names. *Iohn 10.* Christ calleth his sheep by their names.

This is a speciall comfort for vs, to know that our names particularly are knowne to Christ, and be written in his bil which is the King of heauen and earth.

The Lord to comfort *Moses* in trouble, yfed this, that he kno-

with him by his name: and so should it be to vs, that our names are knowne to Christ, and he will accordingly help vs. 1. *Timoth. 2.* there it is made the foundation of saluation, *that the Lord knoweth who be his.*

Which haue not defiled. These were commended for sinceritie and vprightnesse of life and conuersation: though the rest of the church were dead, yet these were alieue, and kept themselves from all appearance of sin. Now Christ commending them, he leaueeth in them a patterne of sinceritie for vs to follow, to be as a looking glasse, to see how we should professe religion. We must not onely know and speake of the Gospell, but we must liue accordingly, we must keep our garments fro pollutiō, liue without al occasion of sin: and that we may liue sincerely, we must first abstaine fro al sin in our own persons, take heed we practise no sin. Secondly, we must take heed of contagion of sin, not partake in other mens sins, by cōsent or winking at them, or giuing counsel to sin. Thirdly, we must abstaine from all occasions of sinne, from all appearance of euill, we must not once name sin, nor giue the least approbation thereof, *Let not fornication be named among you. Eph. 5.* Then we must behold this patterne, labor to be like them, that Christ may commend vs as he did them: and this we must do by liuing well, for religion stands not in knowledge but in practise, and by doing these three, that is, abstaining from the practise of all sinne, from the contagion of sin, and from all pro-uocation to sin, we shall imitate them and become a most excellent people, and a worthy church of Christ. Out of this place the Papiſts gather, that a man after baptisme may liue without al mortall sins, for these few, hauing put on Christ, liued free from all sinne, nay from all appearance of sin. But first though they liued so till this time, yet how proue they they liued so after? secondly, they be said to keepe their garments vndefiled, not because they sinned not at all, but because they liued and endeouored in constant purpose not to sinne, but in all things to please God: and so the Lord accepts their will and constant endeouour, for the deed, and they be righteous before God, and no sinners, but keepers of the law.

And these shall walke with me in white. Here after the commendation

mendation is a promise, *to walk*, that is, *liue*, in *white*, that is, in ioy and happineſſe. *Eccleſ. 9. 8. Let thy garments be white*: that is, reioyce and take thy lawfull pleaſure, in the things of this life. The church before was threatned to haue Chriſt as iudge, and to deſtroy them, but theſe few they ſhall not taſte of his wrath, but be with Chriſt for euer in glory and happineſſe. By which we ſee, that men which communicate not with the ſins of townes, countries, or nations, ſhall not partake in iudgement with them, *Lot* liued in Sodom, yet his righteous ſoule was not partaker of their ſins, neither was it of their puniſhment, *Gen. 19. Ezech. 6. 9.* they which mourned for the ſins of the people were marked, and in the deſtruction not touched. By reaſon of our long peace, ſins abound, ſo that there is plentie of ſin, of contempt of the word, of religion, &c. Theſe ſins call for iudgment, and wil haue iudgement: now if we would eſcape this iudgement, we muſt take heed we communicate not with theſe ſins, and then we ſhall eſcape, though we liue in Sodome.

After the promiſe, followeth a reaſon of the ſame: *For they be worthy*. Hence the Papiſts gather, that a man by his workes may merit heauē, becauſe here they be worthy of reward, & be worthy to walke with Chriſt in glory. But I anſwer, all true ſeruants of God be worthy of life euerlaſting, becauſe God the father giueth Chriſt to euery true beleeuer: ſo that euery beleeuer may truly ſay, Chriſt is mine: and withall he giueth the ſpirit of Chriſt, which ſtirreth vp in the heart true iuſtifying faith, which layeth hold on Chriſt, applieth him and all his righteousneſſe. Now Chriſt being giuen to vs by God, and receiued of vs by faith, is wholly ours, and his righteousneſſe is made ours by imputation, ſo that Chriſt with all his benefits is truly ours: and when one ſtands thus iuſtified in Chriſt, and clothed with his righteousneſſe, he is ſaid to be worthy of ſaluation, not for any thing of his owne, but for Chriſts righteousneſſe: for there is a double righteousneſſe, one of the perſon, as when Chriſts righteousneſſe is imputed to vs: another of the work, as when a work is done answerable to the rigour of the law, and then it is meritorious. Now Chriſt ſpeaketh here of the worthineſſe of the perſon, not of the worke of the perſon, ſtanding righteous in

Christs righteousness.

Verse 5. To him which overcometh. Here is the conclusion: in it note two parts: first, a promise: secondly, a commaundement: of these before. *To him which overcometh:* that is, which getteth victory ouer all his spirituall enemies: which we do, by holding faith and a good conscience in all things to the end: and this is, first the partie to whom.

Seeing that the promises are euer made to him which overcometh, we must labour to haue that estate; in conscience truly to say, we haue laboured in all things to keepe faith and a good conscience, and to thinke it a miserable estate to be overcome of any enemy, be it sin, the diuell, the world, or our flesh. I come to the thing promised, which is threefold in words, but one in substance, namely glory, happines, and life euerlasting. First, *He shall be clothed in white array*, that is, with eternall glory, happines, and life.

Out of this the Papists gather, that a man may do a good work in respect of reward. It is true indeed, one may do so, as *Moses* had respect to the recompence of reward, *Hebr. 11. 26.* yet that must not be the principall end, but faith to edifie the church and other men; & thē we may do it to receiue eternal life as a reward.

And will not cut his name out of the booke of life. Here two questions must be assailed, 1. What is the booke of life? 2. Whether one can be blotted out of it? for thou hast the booke of life in Gods predestination, or his decree in election, by which he hath ordained some men to life in his good pleasure: & this decree of God is called in a resemblance the booke of life. For as a General in the field hath his book, wherein he writes al his souldiers names: and a Magistrate keeps a record, writing in it all the citizens of that citie; so God hath his decree, wherein he writes the names of all those whom he will saue in his secret counsell.

The second question is: Whether one can be put out of this booke? *Ans.* A man is written in this booke two wayes: first, in the iudgement of God truly: secondly, in the iudgement of men. Now if a man be truly written in the counsell of God, then he cannot be put out: but if he be onely in the iudgement of men, he may be blotted out. For the first, they cannot, because Gods
counsell

counsell is vnchangeable: and (*Rom. 8.*) whom he predestinates he calleth, iustificieth, and sanctifieth. This golden chaine cannot be broken, but whom he predestinath he glorifieth, *ergo* they cannot fall finally. As for the other, being onely in the iudgement of men, as all be liuing in the church professing Christ, these may be put out, *Psal. 69. Let them be blotted out of the booke of life:* he prayeth that they might be manifested, that they were neuer indeed in the booke of life.

Hence, first we see the number of the elect is certaine, for their names are in Gods bill, they cannot be put out, but remaine for euer. This then is no vniuersall election: for what neede God a bill or booke to write in some, if all were elected? Seeing some men being in this booke onely in the iudgement of men, may be blotted out, and manifested to men to be but hypocrites: then we must take heed of all sin, and make conscience of euery sinne; for so often as we sin, we reach vp a pen to heauen to crosse our names, to blot them out as much as in vs lieth. Let vs then looke to haue our consciences assured that we be in that booke: which we may, if we find our consciences free from all sin, and from all appearance of sin. But some godlesse person will hence gather, I will liue as I list, for if I be in the booke of life I shall be saued; if not damned, liue how I can. But these deceiue themselues, for if their names be in it, they cannot liue in sin, but in faith and obedience, in newnesse of life and repentance: for he which is predestinated is iustified, and must liue in repentance and faith: and as surely as he shall be saued, he shall liue in faith and repentance.

3. *I wil' confesse him in the kingdom of heauen.* That is, at the last day I wil take him for mine: he which thus ouercometh and liueth in faith & a good conscience, I wil confesse him to belong to me, to be my meber, I wil separate him from al the world, and take him to my selfe, and pronounce to him the sentence of absolution, *Come thou blessed of my Father, Math. 25.* The end why Christ propounds this third blessing, is to moue euery person in the church of Sardis, to confesse Christ in this world: for he reasons thus, If thou shalt confesse me before men, I wil confesse thee before my Father: if not, I will deny thee, euen before my Father.

And so to vs, if we will haue Christ confesse vs before God, we must confesse him before men, and let no creature make vs deny him, but stand out against all his enemies, euen against the gates of hel and the diuel, which is indeed a hard matter for flesh & blood; yet Christ perswades vs to do it, & to take paines to professe him before all men, for he will confesse vs before God. If a King should come in company, and choose out one, and come to salute him familiarly, call him by his name, and take him by the hand, that would be a great credit: but what a happinesse is it to haue Christ Iesus King of all kings to come and call vs by our names, take vs by the hands, confesse vs to be his friends, and pronounce the sentence of absolution before God, his Angels, the diuel and all men, euen our enemies?

Verf. 7. And write vnto the Church of Philadelphia. Here beginneth the sixth particular Epistle, reaching to the fourteenth verse. And as before euery particular Epistle, was set downe a particular commandement, to write: so here Christ giueth *Iohn* a particular commandement to write: the end of which commandement, is to warrant *Iohns* calling, as before often I haue shewed.

The Epistle hath three parts: first, the Preface: secondly, the matter: thirdly, the conclusion. The Preface is in the seuenth verse, and it sheweth in whose name this Epistle was written: to wit, in the name of Christ. And as in other Epistles Christ was described, to get credit to the Epistle: so is he here by two properties: first, of holinesse: secondly, of truth: besides, he is described by his kingly office: which hath the keyes of *Dauid*. The 1st property of Christ is, he is *holy*. But how can Christ be holy, seeing he cometh of *Adam*, as he is man? To this many answer, that Christ tooke his substance indeed from *Adam*, yet so sanctified, as that it is free from all sinne. This, though it be true, yet is not sufficient: for as we take from *Adam* the corruption of nature, so we haue from him the guilt of sin. Now though sanctification taketh away corruption of nature, yet it taketh not away the guilt of sinne. Then the true answer is this: All which come of *Adam* by naturall generation, and that commaundement which God gaue in the creation, *Increase and multiply*, they take from

from *Adam* both corruption of nature and guilt of sin: for both be equally conveyed to vs from *Adam*. But God, to prevent this, ordained that Christ should be borne, not by naturall generation, but by a miraculous conception: and so though he take of man mans nature, yet he taketh not mans siane, which he should as well haue had, if he had come by ordinarie and naturall generation. Now in that it is said, Christ is *holy*, note that he is so, first, in regard of himselfe: secondly, of vs & his church. In regard of himselfe, first, as he is God: his Godhead is holy, nay his diuine nature is holinesse it selfe: there is no difference betweene Christ as he is God, and his holinesse. Secondly, in regard of his humane nature, it was not onely free from all sin, but filled with all holinesse, aboue all men and Angels: he had the holy Ghost without measure. Thirdly, in his actions he was holy, as in his actuall obedience and fulfilling the law. Secondly, Christ is holy in regard of his Church, euen of vs his members, because he is the author of all holinesse in vs, we haue all our holinesse from him, nay, he is the very roote of holinesse; not as the Father, or the holy Ghost, but in a more speciall manner, because from Christ as the roote, springeth holinesse in all his members. And as from *Adam* (being the root in whom all mankind stood) was conveyed sin and corruption to all which came of him: so from Christ, being the roote, is conveyed holinesse to all his members in him: he is our sanctification, because we fetch our righteousness from him, as a branch doth sappe from the roote: for the humane nature of Christ is the very root from whence is conveyed to vs all righteousness.

Seeing Christ is holy, both in himselfe and in vs, yea the root of all holinesse, we must note this maine principle of all true religion: which is, to be set and ingrafted into Christ as a branch into a tree, and being once in him, to become new creatures, to labour to feele the power of Christ killing in vs the old man, our naturall corruptions, and also renewing in vs the new man, and the image of God, in righteousness and true holinesse, to feele the power and vertue of Christ as sensibly in vs, as we feele the corruption of nature, and shew this vertue we receiue of Christ, euen as a branch sheweth the sappe it receiue from the

roote, by the leaues and fruite.

2 Seeing Christ was thus holy, he propoundeth to vs a pattern to follow, teaching vs to be holy as he was holy, to make conscience of al sinne, to be conformable to him, to marke what he did, and to imitate it. 1. *Ioh. 3. 4.* We must purge our selues of sinne, and be pure as he is pure: for he which is not holy as he is holy, shall haue no benefit or fellowship by his death and passion. Thirdly we see, that title given to the Bishop of Rome is blasphemous, to call him *Holinesse*, as it is common in all their speeches to him. Now he in that taketh to him the title of Christ which is a part of Christs honour, communicable to none else: nay, he taketh more on him then Christ here doth: for Christ is called but *holy*, he is called *holinesse* it selfe.

The second title of Christ, is *truth*. Christ is called true in three respects: first, because without error and ignorance he knoweth all things as they be in themselves: so do not creatures, but by vertue from him. Secondly, because what he willeth and decreeth, he willeth and decreeth seriously; without fraud, deceit, or any contradiction, as appeareth in the whole Scripture, wherein is nothing contrarie to it selfe; but all without chaunge and alteration. Thirdly, because he maketh good all his promises in his word, he accomplisheth and performeth them all, he is the performance of the *yas, yea and Amen*.

V/c. 1.

Seeing Christ is true, nay, truth it self, we see a difference betwene Christ and all false spirits, for they be spirits of errors: the diuell is a lyer from the beginning, he is the father of lyes, nay his nature is to lie, he can do nothing else: but Christ is true, nay truth it selfe, euery way true, in his knowledge, in his will, and in his promises, he is true.

V/c. 2.

Seeing Christ is absolutely true, we must beleue in him, and beleue his promises in his word without doubting: for seeing Christ is true, nay truth it selfe, what need we call his promises into question? And this shold be the very prop of our faith, that he which promiseth is true, & therefore wil perform his promise. So in persecutio, in trouble and affliction, trust in Christ, he hath promised to helpe; he will not faile, because he is most true of his promise.

Seeing

Seeing he is so true, he propoundeth himselfe to be followed of vs. Christ he knoweth things truly, he willeth and decreeth things seriously: so should we promise, and performe, and make good our lawfull promises. *Psal. 55. The Lord hateth the deceitfull person. Ren. 20. without, that is in hell, be all deceitfull and lying persons. Psal. 15.* It is a note of a member of the Church, and of Christ, to be true and faithfull, and to speake truth from his heart, for the diuell is the author of lies.

3 Christ is described by his kingly office: *which hath the keyes of David.* First, let vs see what is meant by the key of *David.* *Esay 22. 22.* speaking of *Eliakim*, saith: *I will put the key of David upon his shoulder: for Ezra had bene Hezechiabs Steward, an ancient steward in many kingdomes: but in his dayes he began to be negligent in his dutie, therefore he decreed to cast him out, and to place Eliakim in his stead, (2. King. 18. 18.) and therefore saith, he will put the key of David, that is, the gouernement of the kingdome of Iudah on his shoulder: for by Davids house is meant the kingdome of David; and the giuing of the key, is the placing and inuesting him into his office, and giuing him the authoritie of the kingdome of David.* Christ here hath the key of *David*, great and large authoritie of the Churches, as a chiefe Gouvernor in a kingdome. It will be said, *Davids* key was temporall, Christs kingdome spirituall. *Ans.* First, Christ had *Davids* key properly: for when Christ was borne, the scepter was departed from Iudah to the Romaine Emperour; so that Christ then was the next to it, and had true right to the crowne and kingdome: *Luk. 3.* And Christ challenging his right, saith, (*Mat. 17. 26.*) That the Kings sonnes be free, and therefore he need not to pay tribute.

2 Christ had *Davids* key typically and figuratiuely: for *Davids* temporall kingdome was a figure of Christs spirituall kingdome: so *David* was a figure and type of Christ, therefore he is often called Christ: and *Ezec. 3.* Christ is called *David*. Now he is said to haue *Davids* kingdome, and not *Neroes* or any other, because their kingdomes were kingdomes of darknesse and miserie, and cursed kingdomes: but *Davids* kingdome was a kingdome of light, a blessed kingdome, hauing those men which

were acceptable to God, and therefore was a type of the kingdom of Christ. Then where Christ is said to haue *Dauids key*, it is not so to be vnderstood, that he had the same with *Dauid*, but that which is signified by *Dauids key*, Christ *Mat. 2.* is called a *Nazarite*, not that he vsed their rites and customes: for he dranke wine, they did not; but because he was that signified by a *Nazarite*, namely, by *Sampson*, *Jud. 13.* For as he slue more by his death, then by his life: so Christ he saued more by death then by his life: yet Christ was a *Nazarite*, that is, seuered from all sin and pollution. And so Christ had *Dauids key*, that is, the spirituall key signified by his temporall key, which key signifieth authoritie, power, and gouernment of the church of God.

Which openeth and none shutteth. In these words Christ hath relation to an house, where, when one openeth the doore, he openeth the house: and so Christ, he openeth and he shutteth, which sheweth his absolute and soueraigne authoritie: he hath the key of *Dauid*, and he hath it absolutely, no creature is aboue him, but he can shut or open at his pleasure. Now this *key* is the power of Christ, *In his hand*, which is a supreme soueraignetie ouer the church, by which he can saue or destroy. Now this soueraigne power of Christ hath three parts: first, to prescribe: secondly, to iudge: thirdly, to saue and destroy. First, to prescribe, he hath an absolute power without constraint of any creature, to commaund what he will haue done or not: so he propoundeth doctrine to mens consciences to be beleueed vpon paine of eternall death. Christ sheweth in the bookes of the old and new Testament, that no man can make one article of our beleefe: nay he which teacheth any other doctrine then that, is accursed, *Gal. 1.* Secondly, Christ hath absolute power to prescribe regiment to his Church, how and in what maner, and also the persons by whom it shall be gouerned. So *Moses* made the tabernacle according to the patterne Christ shewed him. *Salomon* built the Temple according to the forme he saw by reuelation. *1. Chron. 28. 12.* Thirdly, Christ hath authority to prescribe times for his worship, to appoint Sabbaths, &c. And (*Gen. 1.*) as he created the Sabbath, so hath he power alone to alter it, no creature can prescribe a time to Gods seruice, to the end of the world, but

but Christ alone. Then it is not true, that the Church hath power to appoint two Sabbaths in one weeke, or one in many weekes; for it is Christs honour to prescribe his worship, and the time of the same.

The second part of Christs soueraigne power, is to iudge, to haue power to determine of his owne will, without helpe of any man or Angell. And in this regard it belongeth to him to giue sense of the Scriptures, he alone gaue them, he is the law-giuer, and must expound his owne law. Secondly, Christ alone must decide questions and controuersies concerning faith. Then the Church hath not any such power, but from Christ, by helpe of the written word, by which Christ expoundeth them to vs.

The third part of this soueraigntie is, that Christ can *saue and destroy*, open and shut, he alone hath the keys of heauen and hell: he can open, that is, pardon sinne properly. And he alone promisseth this pardon, and can performe it being God: and as he giueth the pardon for sinne, so he giueth also eternall life, sauing mens soules. Secondly, he hath power to shut, to cast some into hell, and to destroy, when men liue in sinnes and dye in the without repentance: he hath power to hold men in sins, after to cast them into hell, and shut them vp for euer.

Seeing Christ prescribeth this doctrine to the soule and conscience, to the most secret part of mans soule, & such doctrine as can saue and destroy: we see, Christ he is Lord of the Church, he is Lord of the most secret wils and affections, of the chiefeest part of the mind. The Papists say, that by vertue of this key of *Dauid*, Christ can set vp and depose kings and princes at his pleasure: but this they hold, craftily to bring in the damned power of the Pope. But it will do them no good: for Christ as he is Mediator of the Church, and gouernour thereof, he deposeth none, he maketh no king: but as he is God, so he maketh and pulleth downe at his pleasure, being farre aboue all men. And hence kings are called *Gods*, because they represent Christ as he is God. Christ as he is Mediatour, maketh men spirituall kings, but he maketh not temporall kings but onely as he is God. For if he had such power, why did he refuse to deuide the inheritance, saying, *Who made me a Iudge?* and to punish the

adulterous woman, confessing he was not a Magistrate.

From this power is another deriued *ſic* Christ: namely, *the power of the keyes*, which proceedeth from the power of Christ, and by which power the key of *Dauid* is put in execution. *Mat. 16. 19. I will giue thee the keyes of heauen.* Now this power of the keyes, is a ministerie granted to the Church of God, to open and shut the kingdome of heauen. First, it is a ministerie, that is, a seruice and dutie: for that which the Ministers do, is but a seruice done to the Church, and they be but seruants and stewards of Christ in the Church of God, in gouerning it. So then it is no authoritie but a seruice. When *Adam* fell, we all fell in him, and he thrust himselfe and all mankind out of Gods kingdome by his sinne, & closed vp heauen gates against vs. Now since that fall, Christ became man, and in his manhood dyed for our sinnes, and made satisfaction to God for them; and this satisfaction of Christ is the thing which properly openeth the kingdome of heauen, and nothing else properly. Christ alone can open and shut, the Church can only reueale and pronounce the will of God: then no otherwise she openeth or shutteth, but by declaring the same to be open or shut.

To the Church of God. That is, to the companie of true beleeuers called to saluation by Christ, to them onely is this key giuen, *Mat. 18. 18.* the promise is made onely to the Church and Gods people, not to all societies of men.

The end of it is, *to open and shut.* How, Christ he knew best, *Iob. 20. 23.* where he sheweth, what is the key, and what to open and shut: namely, to pardon and remit sinnes, and no way else can men open and shut. Now we must distinguish betweene giuing sentēce, & pronouncing that sentence. The first belongs to Christ alone; the second to man, who forgiveth sinne, not by giuing sentence, but pronouncing sentence giuen already by Christ in heauen. And to make the church to forgive sinnes properly, is to robbe Christ of a speciall honor due to his Godhead. Then the right vse of the power of the keyes, is, when the church of God vseth them onely in the name of Christ, to open and shut: first, as his seruants and stewards: secondly, according to his will and word, not mans traditions and affections. Thirdly,

ly, to bring sinners to saluation, to beget and continue them in repentance. They being so vied haue a promise: namely, *What you bind on earth, is bound in heauen, &c.* and it is the means by which Christs power is put in execution.

Now this power of the keyes given to the Church, hath two parts: first, the ministerie of the word: secondly, spirituall iurisdiction. The first, *Mat. 16. 19.* namely, the ministerie of the word, is set downe and authorised by Christ: *I will giue thee the keyes of the kingdome of heauen*, that is, the word of God: and whose sinnes thou shalt bind by that word, they shall be bound by the cords of their sinnes in heauen, &c. This ministerie of the word, is a key to open and shut, two wayes: first, by teaching & expounding the word of God, and doctrine of saluation: and this is a key. *Luk. 11. 52.* *You haue taken away the key of knowledge.* The key of knowledge is the doctrine of the word of God. Secondly, the ministerie of the word is a key in men lawfully called, in that they apply in the ministerie thereof, the curses of the law to them which liue in sinnes, and the promises of the Gospell to the repentant heart. So it openeth and shutteth the kingdome of heauen: for that which the Minister pronounceth by Gods word to be bound on earth, is fast bound in heauen, &c. Here we must remember, that Ministers are either certaine or vncertaine of mens repentance: being certaine, they must remit sinnes certainly and simply: but being vncertaine, they must do it with condition, and so they must simply or with condition, remit and retaine sinnes. Then in the publike handling of the word, men must pronounce with conditiō, seeing they be vncertaine who are penitent, who not. Their auditors are a mixt companie, some belecue, and some do not beleue: *Lydiaes* heart is opened, *Simon Magus* is hardened. The second power of the keyes, is spirituall iurisdiction: it is called spirituall, to distinguish it from mens, and ciuill iurisdiction of the Magistrate. It is set downe and confirmed by Christ, *Mat. 18. 16, 17, 18.* and after, the promise is added, *vers. 19. 20.* This spirituall iurisdiction is a power, whereby the Church pronounceth sentence vpon an obstinate sinner, and putteth the same sentence in execution. It hath two parts: Excommunication,

and absolution. Excommunication is an action of the church, in the name of Christ excluding an obstinate offender from the outward privileges of the church and the kingdom of heaven. That so much is in true excommunication, we see 1. *Cor.* 5. the incestuous person must be excluded from the church, and be thrust out into the kingdom and regiment of Satan, and his body some way afflicted. *Math.* 18. 17. if the offender will not repent being excommunicate, he must be as a prophane man, even one which hath no title to the kingdom of heaven. But some may say, Christ onely can thrust them out of the kingdom of heaven. It is true indeed, so he doth properly, yet the church pronounceth who be receiued and who refused, as that an obstinate sinner is shut out of the church, and withall shut from the kingdom of heaven, she can debarre him of the outward privileges of the church. 1. *Cor.* 6. the drunkard which liueth in drunkenness shall not come to heaven: vpon which ground the church shuts him out: by her sentence, cut out of the kingdom of God & Christ. *Ob.* If this be so, the true child of God may be shut out, seeing he may fall to such sins. *Ans.* He may in part, and for a time, not wholly and for euer, because he may be overtaken often, but yet as a free citizen is known to be a free-man, though he be in prison for a time, and so hath no vse of his freedome; so the child of God; though in part, for a time he be shut out, hauing no vse of the kingdom of heaven, yet wholly and for euer he is not; but so soone as he begins to repent, he shall be receiued againe.

¶ Excommunication being so weightie a matter, it must be vsed with great aduice, and due preparation, as we would when we cut off a leg or an arme: not rashly, for then we sin against the third commaundement, seeing it is one of Gods speciall ordinances, which we abuse when it is executed for each smal offence. This excommunication hath one especial degree, as 1. *Cor.* 16. 22. he which loueth not Christ, let him be *anathema*, that is, accursed, and wholly shut from the kingdom of heaven. And this is onely pronounced vpon one which sinneth against the holy Ghost, and then the church vpon sufficient ground may pronounce it. But it is very hard to discern this sin, being more
in

In the heart then any where else: for it is a set malice against the person of Christ, and that vpon knowledge. Now contrary to excommunication is absolution: when an offender, vpon his sufficient repentance, is approoued to be a member of the church, and of Christ: first Christ must receiue him; then the church, vpon his repentance, pronounceth and declareth him to be receiued.

Further, to know the power of the keyes, we must know foure abuses, crept in the vse of the power of them: the first abuse was in former ages, in that they gaue them onely to *Peters* person, & barred al other Pastors from them; whereas they belong to al Pastors in their places as well as *Peter*. *Ob.* *Mat.* 16. 19. Christ saith, *I will giue to thee Peter.* *Ans.* But before he spake to all the Disciples: and *Peter* he being more bold, and indued with aptnes, answered in steed of all: not that the rest did not answer, but to auoid confusion he spake for them all, ergo Christ speakes to him in steed of them al. Secondly (*Iohn* 20. 23.) he giues it to them al, not to *Peter* alone. And Ministers haue that power conueyed from the Apostles, by vertue of Christs promise, *Mat.* 28. he will be with them, not onely in their persons, but in them which followed, to the end of the world: to them (I say) which should preach and baptise as they did.

The second abuse is, that the church of Rome hath turned the power of the keyes into the supremacie of the church: for they make it a supremacie ouer al Princes and churches, whereby they put vp and pul downe Kings, and make lawes to bind all mens consciences. For it is a seruice, and no supremacy.

The third abuse is, that they will haue onely the Clergie, and not the Prince to deale in matters of religion: but we reade the contrary in Gods word. *Iosias* 2. *Chron.* 35. 32. he intends to banish idolatrie, and to set vp the true worship of God, and therefore causeth the people of Benjamin and Iudah to stand to his couenant, his subiects to obey his intent: and this is commended in him. But they say, that Princes haue not the chiefeft power to gouerne, because Pastors haue the power of the keyes. *Ans.* Spirituall power is giuen to the Pastors, to rule the church spiritually; yet Princes haue power to rule the church ciuilly, to cause

their subiects to embrace true religion, and to forsake idolatrie: but then (say some) they should be vnder the Pastors. *Answer.* If we consider the Pastors person and goods, they be vnder the Princes: but as they beare the key of Christ and his word, the King must honour them; for they stand in the stead of Christ: but to make the Pastor aboue the Prince, is a ready way to get all into his hand, and a great abuse in the church of God.

The fourth abuse is, that the Romish church hath turned the power of the keys into the hands of their Priests in the sacramēt of penance, for euery Popish priest sits as iudge, and euery man cometh to him, kneeleth to him; confesseth all his sinnes he can remember against euery commandment: he inioyneth him to bewaile them, and after some signes of repentance, he forgiueth the fault, and that properly as God doth: yet after pardon, he must vndergo some temporall punishment, for he forgiueth the fault only, not the punishment. In which abuse note these errors. First, there is confession of all sinnes, which hath no warrant in the word: secondly, he giuing absolution properly as God doth, robbeth Christ of his honor: for eue the Pharises confessed, that God alone forgiueth sinnes properly. Thirdly, they absolue from the fault, but not the punishment, and this is to enrich themselues, and to get whole countries, yea all mens lands and liuings into their owne hands. Fourthly, they will haue them make satisfaction to God, which is impossible, and withall, maketh Chriffs satisfaction imperfect. Now by these foure abuses it appeareth, that Christ vnto the is no true Christ: but though the Pope giue the keyes of *Peter*, the crosse keyes in his Armes, yet he hath not the true vse of them: nay, seeing he maketh new dopes, (as beside that of heauen and hel,) those of Purgatorie and *Lymbus Patrum*, he must make new keyes to open them, flat contrarie to the keyes of Christ. In that Christ is said both to open and shut, we learne, that he openeth not to all men and euery person, but shutteth heauen gates against some: for *Adam* falling from Gods fauour by his sinne, shut out himselfe and his posteritie, both out of the heauenly and earthly Paradise: so that our sinnes be now as a partition wall, and a cloud to separate God and vs. And for this, euen for our sinnes,
Christ

Christ shutteth some out of heaven. Then by this we see our miserable case: for by our finnes we be all shut out of heaven, and ynder the power of Satan. Our finnes have bene as so many bars to shut vp heaven gates, which is no small matter, yet the diuell bewitcheth vs, and maketh vs thinke sinne is no sinne, great finnes be small; small, none: whereas the least sinne is sufficient to shut vs out of heaven for euer.

Againe, seeing sinne shutteth vs out of heaven, we must repent for euery sinne: for we cannot come thither if we liue in any one sinne, euery sinne is a barre and Locke to shut vs from Gods kingdome: and we must labour to haue these bolts taken of, which is only by the passion of Christ, for that alone can take them away. Thirdly, we see that Christ opened heaven to some, as to *Nathanael* in the ministry of the word: and he hath now opened heaven doores by his death, and traced the way by his blood. Now the doore being open, we must labour to enter in, yea thrust and croud to get in. That we may come thither, we must become members first of his church on earth, else we cannot come to heaven. That we may do this, first we must come to the doore, namely the church, before we come to the house, namely heaven. Now the church is the doore, and in it is the key to open heauen gates, namely the word of God. That thou maist come into the church, first humble thy selfe for all thy finnes, secondly trust in Christ for the free pardon of all thy sins, and purpose in thy heart to liue a new life, and constantly in all things to please God to the end, and then thou art in the church, and hast the key to open heauen gates. But if thou come not to open this doore in this life where the key is, thou canst neuer enter into the kingdome of heaven in the life to come.

Verse 8. I know thy workes. From this eighth verse to the eleuenth, is contained the matter of the Epistle, containing three heads: first, praise: secondly, promise: thirdly, commandement. The praise is in the eighth verse: the promise is two-fold, in the ninth and tenth verses: the commaundement in the eleuenth. 1. The praise is propounded summarily, *I know thy workes*. Then the reason why he praiseth her, where the former words be expounded.

I know thy workes. This hath bin expounded in euery Epistle, I know and approue thy course and conuersation of life. These words are repeated in euery Epistle, to stir vp euery church and member of the same, to the feare of God: for Christ by these words would haue vs be perswaded, that God is present with vs, seeth all we do, is an eye-witnesse of all our actions. Then we should do all our actions as in his presence, as before his Maiestie: and where this consideration is not in some measure, there is no feare of God, nor true religion. The reason of this commendatio is added, *Behold, &c.* here note two points, first a signe of his approbation, *I haue giuen thee an open doore, &c.* secondly, what be the workes he approoued, *Thou hast a litle strength.*

Behold, &c. These words may be vnderstood either of the Angell of Philadelpha alone, or of the whole church, both Pastor and people. If of the Angell, this is the sense: Behold I haue giuen thee, that is, behold and consider I haue giuen and vouchsafed thee libertie, and oportunitie to preach my Gospel, and by preaching to win and conuert sinners to me. So 1. Cor. 16. 9. there *Paul* vseth the same words, signifying by the doore of vterance, libertie and oportunitie to preach the Gospell of Christ.

For thou hast a litle strength: That is, though thou be endued but with a small measure of gifts, yet thou hast maintained the doctrine of saluation, and not denied my Gospel in persecution. Now Christ saying thus to this Minister, that he had giuen him libertie to preach; shewes it is a great priuiledge to preach the Gospell, and to win soules to Christ: for so much the word *Behold*, and the words themselues import, That it is so, it appeareth in that the most worthy Prophets haue not had this graunted, as *Esay*, *Ezechiel*, &c. they hardened the people, and they say they spent their strength in vain, & did no good. For this, ministers are called the instruments of saluation, *Dan. 12.* they shall shine, for the winning of soules, as stars in heauen. Then they which haue this priuiledge, should esteeme of it highly aboue any thing in the world, for it is a most excellent dignitie, aboue all earthly preferments, for which we ought especially to magnifie Gods mercie.

For

For thou hast a little strength. Though thou hast but small measure of grace and gifts, yet thou hast maintained my word. Here we see that Ministers, though indued with small gifts, may do much good to the Church, as this Angell of Philadelphia did: and we haue seene by experience, when as in Queene *Maries* time, in this place learning abounded, yet not one of them would stand out for the Gospell: yet one not farre off, hauing but small gifts in comparison of their schoole-learning, stood out and sealed the profession of it with his bloud. And so now men of smaller gifts further the Church and Gospell, more then they which haue farre greater knowledge in the arts and tongs: for such as haue greater gifts, be commonly slacke, so that they which be behind them in gifts an hundred degrees, do more good in the Church then they, by a thousand degrees. Yet for all this, men must be brought vp in learning, and labor to know Arts and Tounge, though we see it cometh to passe, that men which want such schoole-learning, they haue zeale, and do more good then they which excell in them: that so men of greater gifts might be humbled in the consideration of this point. *Naamans* seruant perswadeth him, when *Elisba* the Prophet cannot. 2. *King.* 5. 12.

Behold. These words may also be vnderstood of the whole Church: *I haue giuen thee a doore:* that is, a speciall priuiledge to enter into the kingdome of heauen, and title to it, I approue thy workes: and this is a signe of it, that I haue giuen thee entrance into the same. Now this is a priuiledge not belonging to all men, but onely to the Church of God. Which confuteth vniuersall redemption. If this then be a priuiledge of the Church, to enter into the kingdome of heauen, and to haue such liberty, we must labour to vse it, struiuing to enter into that place. We haue this priuiledge, to see heauen open by faith: we must not then be so slacke to enter into it: but alas we make no account of it, we are wholly possessed with the profits and pleasures of this life: and our sinnes are such a load to vs, that we cannot enter in. Oh let vs cast off such burthens, that so we may more easily enter.

Which no mā shall shut. That is, no power, after I haue opened

heauen, shall be able to shut it. Here after the libertie, he sheweth the continuance of it: namely, for euer. How then is it true, that Christ died for all men effectually, if all men are not saved, because they will not? So Christ should for his part open heauen, and they should shut it by their wils. But Christ saith, no power either of the diuell or man can shut it, he hauing once opened the same.

For thou hast a litle strength. Thou art indued with a litle and small measure of grace, of faith, hope, & regeneration: yet according to that measure, thou hast defended my word, and not denied me in persecution. By this we see, that a man indued with a small measure of Gods spirit, may do works acceptable to God, and by the same come to life euerlasting, if his grace be true grace. *Math. 17.* if their faith be but as a graine of mustard seed, it shall be able to remoue mountaines. Now that which is true of miraculous faith, that is true of iustifying faith: if it be true, though neuer so litle, yet it shall be able to do workes pleasing to God, and by the same we may come to saluation: for God regardeth not so much the measure of grace, as the maner, that it be true, not fained. In this is a speciall comfort for those which labour to keepe faith and a good conscience. Such are often troubled with the consideration of their owne weaknesse and wants: but they must know, that if they haue true faith, though it be but in small measure, the Lord accepteth of them, if they labour to please God in all things: for the Lord accepteth a man, not for that he should haue, but for that he bestoweth on him, be it much or litle. This may encourage those which be not so forward in religion, which haue not made such proceeding as they should: for many seeing the Lord to require so much, they cast all off, and neuer labour to come to know religion, and to keepe faith and a good conscience. But these shold remember, that the Lord accepteth of small gifts if they be true; he accepteth a man according to the measure of grace he bestoweth on him, be it more or lesse. Then we must not be discouraged for our wants, imperfections, and ignorances: for if we labour to haue true faith, the Lord regardeth not the measure of grace, but that it be true grace. Yet we must take heed

we abuse not this mercie of God, and take occasion to sinne, and to become negligent and carelesse in the duties of religion, but still labour to come to such measure, as the Lord will most approve of.

Because, &c. Here Christ sheweth for what workes he commendeth this Church: first, *she kept his word*: secondly, *she denied not his name*, but maintained it in persecution against all his enemies. And these two containe euen all the duties of a true Christian, and the whole practise of all religion. And these must be an example for vs: we must labour to keepe his word, and in all things to do his will. Secondly, we must in time of persecution defend his name, and maintaine his word against all his enemies.

To keepe his word. A few wordes, but a great dutie: for it signifieth, that she in all things, in euery commaundement of the law and Gospell, had care to obey his word and will. And happy were we indeed, if Christ could say so of vs, that we obeyed his word, all the commandements of the law by obeying, and the Gospell by faith and repentance, &c. But it cannot: for though in shew we professe we do, yet in life we shew we faile in most points of both.

Verf. 9. 10. In these verses are two promises concerning the conuersion of certaine Iewes. *Behold, &c.* Here is the first promise concerning the the confirmation of the Church of Philadelphia. Now it is likely, in this citie there was a synagogue of the Iewes, which bare men in hand, that they were the true worshippers of God, yet denied Christ the Sauour, and so persecuted this Church. Now Christ here promiseth he will make this synagogue repent, and become true members of Christ, to professe Christ, and worship him. In this promise note three points: first, who is the author of their conuersion, namely, God: for so it is said, *I will make them*, or I will bring them to that estate, to worship me. Secondly, who be conuerted, namely, *the synagogue of the Iewes*. Thirdly, the fruites of their repentance: *they shall worship before thy feet*. First, the author of their conuersion is Christ himselfe: for so he saith, *I will make them to repent*. These are significant words, which giue all to God in their con-

uersion of some and of all sinners, God is the sole author, man hath no stroke in his owne conuersion: man indeed willerth it, and is conuerted willingly; yet not by nature doth he will it, but by grace. This confutes the Papiſts, who hold that nature and grace may concur in the conuersion of a sinner: for a man (ſay they) being ſtirred vp by grace, can will and do that which is good. As a man being ſicke, he hath the facultie of walking, yet being ſaint he cannot, vnleſſe he leane on anothers ſhoulder: ſo a man hath a power to will that which is good, but it muſt be ſtirred vp firſt by grace. But *Ephes. 2.* man by nature is not onely ſicke, but ſtarke dead in ſin, and cannot moue one foote, no more then a dead man. *Obiect.* But (ſay they) then man ſhould be but a blocke, if he doth nothing in his conuersion. *Anſw.* Though he do nothing in the matter of conuersion, yet he hath ſenſe and vnderſtanding, which he can vſe in naturall and ciuill cauſes, though he cannot vſe them in ſpirituall actions, and ſo he is not like a ſtocke.

I will giue thee and make thee come: therefore a man being effectually called, he cannot either come, or not come at his pleaſure, as though God did for his part offer man grace, and will him to come, yet he may reſuſe it, and not come: but if God call, man cannot but come, elſe Chriſt would not haue ſaid, *I will giue him and make him come.*

But they ſay, *Matth. 23.* Chriſt ſaith to Ieruſalem, *How oft would I, &c. but you would not.* *Anſw.* He ſpake that not as he was God, but as he was a Prophet, or the Miniſter of circumciſion to the Iewes. Again, ſay they *Act. 27.* they reſiſted the holy Ghoſt. *Anſ.* That is the doctrine of the Apoſtles and Prophets, which was indiſted by the holy Ghoſt, not the ſpirit of God himſelfe, for no inferior power can reſiſt a ſuperior. To come to the next.

Who be conuerted. Namely, a certaine ſynagogue of the Iewes at Philadelpha, which ſaid they were worſhippers of Chriſt, yet indeed were the ſynagogue of Satan, and bond-ſlaues of the diuell.

Ver. Here we ſee not onely ſmall, but great and old ſinners, may repent and be ſaued. Chriſt he died for all kinds of ſinners, great, rebellious and obſtinate: if they can repent, they may be conuerted

ted and come to Christ. 2. *Thess.* 2. 26. they must waite for the repentance of those which were taken in the diuels snares, so as he would wish them no surer. *Rom.* 1. some were giuen ouer to a reprobate sence, yet it is likely that some of them repented. Then we see, great, grieuous, and notorious sins may be forgiuen, yet we must not abuse the grace of God to liue in sinne, but gather comfort hence, that though we be great sinners, yet if we can repent there is mercie with the Lord, no sin can hinder vs from Christ. We reade that Christ healed three sorts of dead men, some when they went to the graue, some buried, and some which lay foure dayes and stanke, as *Lazarus* did. So Christ healeth all kind of persons, he calleth men of all sorts, euen them which lie stinking in sinnes, and are almost rotten in them. Then take the benefite of Christs exceeding mercie, when he calleth thee to repent: come, and cast away thy sinne, though thou be a vassal of Satan, a man rotten in sin, yet Christ hath mercy infinit, he can heale and help thee: and he came to call, not those which think they be righteous, but such as are penitent sinners, to take them out of the Lions paw, and to saue the lost sheepe of Israel. Then abuse not this exceeding mercie, but blesse his Maiestie for it, and vse it as a meanes to repent, to bring thee to newnesse of life, to breake off thy sin, and to make thee a liuely member in Iesus Christ.

I will make them come and worship. Now followeth the third point in the conuersion of a sinner: namely the good fruites of their repentance and conuersion.

I will make them worship. These words are expounded 1. *Cor.* 14. 25. where the children of God prophesying, there cometh in an vnlearned man, he falleth downe and worshippeth: so here he will cause these wicked Iewes to come, and fall downe, and worship and adore the true God in the congregation of Gods church and people. In these words note two fruites of conuersion: the first concernes God: the second, the church of God and the members of the same. For the first; to worship God, it is a true fruite of a conuerted sinner, which no man can truly performe as he ought till he be conuerted, to wit, to worship and adore God in the companie of his saints & people. The

natural man knoweth that there is a God, that this God must be worshipped: but to worship him as he ought, it is a worke that none but he which is truly conuerted can performe. Another may performe outward worship, heare the word, receiue the sacraments: but true worship which is in the heart and spirit (for God is a spirit) that he cannot performe. Now for the worship of God, three properties are to be noted in these words: first, *They shall come and worship*: not worship simply, but *come*, signifying that the true worship of God must be voluntary, willing, and cheerefull, not of constraint or compulsion, but as though there were no law or iudgment for them if they did not, *Psa. 110.* they came freely, not by compulsion.

Then we see how most men come short: for men are not touched with loue of the word, neuer or seldome come to heare it, onely come to morning or euening Prayer, because if they do not, the law wil compell them. These are no true worshippers of God, for he cannot abide any worshippers, but willing and voluntary.

And worship: That is, reuerence God with bowing the body or knee: and this is the second property: we must expresse our reuerence in conuenient and seemely bowing of the body or the knee. Then we see, this is not a thing indifferent, but necessary, to vse meete and conuenient gesture of the bodie in the seruice of God, to bow downe, and prostrate our selues, our soule and bodie. *Esay. 6.* the Angels in the presence of God couer their feet with three wings, and their face with other three, testifying their reuerence and adoration in the worship of God. So must Gods people worship him in soule and bodie, &c. But we come short in this dutie: for whereas we should vse seemely and conuenient gesture of the bodie, to shew our reuerence and humilitie, we see many lie snorting and leaning on their elbowes, others vn-reuerently with their heads couered which ought to be bare, for God is a God of soule and bodie, therefore we must reuerence him with both.

Before thy feet. This is the third propertie: namely, in the congregation of Gods people, they shall prostrate themselues at their feet: in hearing the word or prayer, they must be humbled,

bled, the pride of their hearts beaten downe, be smitten with feare of Gods Maiestie, and of their owne sinnes. *Act. 16. 29.* The taylor ouer night put *Paule* into prison, but in the morning finding all the prison doores open, and thinking all the prisoners to be gone, he would haue killed himself. Now being thus astonished and affraid, *Paule* preacheth the Gospell to him, which before he contemned: but now being smitten with feare of the Maiestie of God, he heareth *Paule* willingly with trembling, and cometh kneeling and crouching to him, saying: *What shall I do? &c.* And vntill a man be smitten downe with feare of Gods glorious Maiestie, with sense of his iudgements for his sinnes, and so come to humble himselfe, he cannot be a true beleueuer of Gods will and word. The cause why there be so few true professors, and that all serue God with formall worship, is, because they were neuer cast downe, they were neuer smitten with feare of Gods Maiestie, neuer confounded for their owne sinnes: for till these be in vs in some sort, we cannot worship God, we cannot bow, and crouch, and humble our selues before him. And this is the cause why most of the people euery where content themselues with outward and formal worship, with mumbling ouer their Creed, Pater noster, and the tenne Commandements; they were neuer smitten downe with feare of Gods iudgements and their owne sinnes: their natural pride was neuer beaten downe with their owne vaworthinesse. Then if we would be true worshippers of God, let vs come willingly, let vs worship God in soule and bodie, and let vs come with humbled hearts, with mortified minds and affections, and so we shall worship him aright.

The second fruite of the conuersion concerneth man: *Before thy feete*, meaning the church of Philadelphia: namely, that they being conuerted to the church of God, should reuerence it, and the members thereof. They shall cast themselues downe in the congregation, as men not worthie to be members of the church, but as a footstoole for them to trample and tread on, by reason of the great sinnes which these conuerted Iewes had before committed. This their exceeding reuerence shewes it selfe in the roote of the same, which is a base conceit and vile opinion of

themselves, and so should every true convert study to confesse, namely, that he is the greatest sinner of all Gods children, and thinke so basely of himselfe, that he can be content to be not a member, but the footstool of the congregation: and this must we follow, if we be truly converted; we must haue a base opinion of our selves, thinke we are the most vile of all Gods people, & giue place to all men in regard of our sins. *Paul Tim. 2.* calleth himselfe *the chiefe of all sinners*, and we must do the like: for the proud Pharisaeall heart is farre from repentance, but the lowly and humble heart is accepted of God.

And shalt know that I loue thee. Here is a reason of the former words, for why did these persecuted Iewes become true worshippers of God, and beleue in him, and reuerence his church? The reason is, because *I wil make them perswaded that I loue them*: and this is the ground of all true reuerence. All superiours haue reuerence due to them by Gods ordinance, as the father, master, Magistrate, &c. Now that they may haue true reuerence of their inferiours, they must first labour to be beloued of the Lord, and then they procure to themselves true reuerence: for the loue of God to vs, is the ground of this. Then those which excel in birth or riches, they must not looke to be reuerenced for them, but for that they be loued of God. And whence cometh it that men in authoritie, as the father, master, Magistrate, Prince, &c. want their due honor and reuerence, but because they seeke not the ground of it, namely to be in the fauour of God.

Because thou hast kept the words of my patience. Here is the second promise of Christ, namely, preservation of this church in time of most bloudie persecution. This Epistle and booke was written by *Iohn* after Christs ascension in the daies of *Diocletian*. Now after him came *Traian*, who rayed a most bloudy persecution against the church in al countries, putting to death many of Gods children. Now of this persecution, Christ foretels this church, and withall makes this promise, that he will preserve them out of the Emperors hand, and addeth a reason, *They were constant to obey his Gospel*. In the promise consider first the occasion, *Because thou hast kept*: secondly, the thing promised, *Deliverance*: thirdly, a prediction or prophetic of that which should come

come on this Church.

The occasion: *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience.* Some vnderstand by word of patience, the comādemēt of patience, which she should obey: but that is too narrow: but it signifieth the doctrine of saluatiō taught in Christ. And this doctrine of saluation is called the word of patience: first, because the doctrine of the Gospell teacheth vs patience: secondly, because it is an instrument of patience, to worke it in vs: for when a man beleeueth his saluation in Christ, then he is patient in all things. Thirdly and especially, because the Gospell cannot be obeyed constantly to the end, without patience. For a time one may obey, but it is impossible to obey and be constant to the end, without patience. The good ground bringeth forth fruit, but in patience. *Luk. 8.*

This Church received the doctrine of the Gospell, and constantly beleueed it: for which is promised deliuerance in persecution. Then we see, that the grace of God well vsed, is rewarded with plentie and increase of grace: so that they which haue but small measure of grace, yet if they be faithfull, the Lord will reward it with greater increase. This should make vs take pains to increase, and vse our talent of faith, patience, repentance, and obedience, to the glorie of God, and good of men: and the Lord will double and triple the same, otherwise he will take that talent from vs. *V/c. 1.*

The doctrine of the Gospell, being a doctrine of patience, how necessarie is it for vs to learne the same, seeing the calamities and afflictions belonging to any calling are very many? We must get our bread in the sweat of our browes, and no man is free from sicknesse, sorrow, and death. Now if we would indure these afflictions, we must haue this grace of patience, and constantly beleue the doctrine of saluation by Christ, which will make vs patient in any crosse whatsoever. Again, we profess the Gospell of Christ: now this is a doctrine not of disorder, but of all order and moderation, teaching vs to moderate and hold in our affections and will: whereas if we want it, we are caried away at their pleasure. *V/c. 2.*

My patience. Christ calleth it his, because he is the author of

it, and worketh it in vs. And this is added to beate downe the pride of this Church. For when Christ commended them for obedience, they might begin to be too proud. Therefore he hauing commended her, lest she should be so, he telleth her it is not her owne, but his gift, he putteth it into her heart. And this may beate downe the pride of our hearts; when we consider that we haue nothing of our selues, but all good things in vs come from Christ; he bestoweth them on vs, he giueth all, nothing we haue of our selues, *What hast thou that thou hast not receiued?* why then should we be proud of it?

I will deliuer thee. That is, from the great and bloudie persecution of *Traian* which lasted fourteene yeares, wherein many of Gods children were put to death. Hence note, that God hath set downe the very times and houres, in which he will trie the faith of his children. *Deut. 8.* the Lord led *Israel* through the wildernesse fortie yeares to trie them. *Chap. 13. 3.* he sendeth false Prophets to trie his seruants, whether they will cleave to him or not. So the Lord hath set times to trie his for their sins, and to see what grace is in their hearts. So he dealt with *Abraham* commanding him to kill his sonne, *Gen. 22. 2.* *Chron. 32. 31.* he left *Hezekiah* to trie him. And so euery Christian hath his set time when he must be tried, that so God may either discover his hypocrisie, or make knowne his faith. When one foundeth a schoole, he setteth some to see how they profit; after seuen yeares or some such space, he will looke to trie the scholers, that he may see how they go on: and without this triall men will not make so good progresse. So in Gods schoole, the Lord he cometh at his set time, to trie what profit men haue made, to trie their hearts, or true obedience, to reward them accordingly.

vs. If God will thus trie vs, then it is best to trie our selues, to seeke what is in vs; for though thou maist bleare the eyes of the world, yet thou canst not deceiue him, he will search thee, and lay all open to the world. If thou be an hypocrite, he will detect thee, and make thee knowne: if not, he will make knowne thy grace. Then neuer dawbe vp the matter, spare not thy selfe, but seriously enter into thine owne heart, and neuer run with *Adam* from

from God, for he will pull thee out, slippe off thy figge leaues, and make thee manifest to all men. Now when we haue entred into a narrow search, we must in a strait maner seeke to reforme, our liues to the rule of Gods word, that for the Lord when he cometh to trie vs, may approue of vs: for it is said, *He will come*, the time is set and cannot be changed. It is a wonder to see how mens mouths be full of precisenesse, so that if men knew not the world to be full of blindnesse, it might daunt many Christian hearts. But seeing there must be a day of triall of all that is in vs, the Lord will not take our hypocrisie, but he looketh for sinceritie: then we must seeke as much as is possible, to conforme our selues to Gods will: for when we haue done all we can, we come farre short, and though men mocke vs, yet God will approue vs. Then labour to be pure in all things without hypocrisie, not giuen to any one sin: but in all things, word, deed, and thought, keepe faith and a good conscience: be not like to the foolish virgins; haue not blazing lampes without oyle. If a man come to trie a scholer in a good schoole, and after long teaching find him not to haue profited, it is a great disgrace: the what disgrace is it for vs, if after so long time of grace Christ come to try vs, and find no grace in vs, no faith, repentance nor obedience, but hypocrisie, and nothing answerable to our profession? But we must with *Dauid*, *Psal. 26*, be so vpright, that for sinceritie of heart, we would be content to haue the Lord to trie vs, being not giuen to any sinne, nor tainted with any offence.

I will saue them. But how can this be, seeing no Church was free frō this generall persecution of *Traian*: for the Churches of Asia were all persecuted. Now this was one of the most famous Churches: how then did Christ saue them, seeing they were persecuted grievously, and (it may be) put to death many of them? *Ans.* Promises of deliuerance (as this is) be not simply made, but with condition. *I will deliuer thee*: that is, saue thee from temptation and persecution, so farre as it shall be hurtfull for the saluation of thee. Christ promiseth freedome, not simply from persecution, but from the hurt which might come thereby to the, in respect of Gods grace and their saluation. *Pf. 91.* He which trusteth in the Lord, the plague shall not come nigh his

dwelling; yet we see in common plagues, as well the godly as the wicked die: yet it is a true promise, that the plague shall not come nigh him, to hurt him or his, to hinder any mans saluation. And we pray: *Lead vs not into temptation*, not to be free from all tēptations, but that we be not wholly left of God vnto the diuel: but though we be tempted, that he will deliuer vs from the euill of the temptation, that it may be for our profit and not our hurt, and so Christs promise is good to them. God will haue his children tempted; yet here is their comfort, he will keepe them that they shall not haue any hurt by the temptation, to hinder his grace or their saluation. Though they be subiect to temptations, and suffer a thousand crosses, yea die in them, yet if they keepe the faith, they shall take no hurt: but the Lord will turne them to their good: so that this may comfort and reuiue any perplexed and oppressed conscience in persecution and temptation. Again, seeing this promise is onely conditionall, and not simple, but as it freeth vs from the hurt of the temptation, we see, they which pray for freedome from all temptations, afflictions; and persecutions, haue no warrant out of Gods word, if they put not in that caueat: for euery petition must haue a promise in the word: now there is no promise that a man shall be free from all temptations, but onely from the hurt of temptations & afflictions. Then we must (when we pray for temporal deliuerances) pray onely with condition, so farre as they shall not hurt our saluation, and hinder Gods grace in vs.

From the houre of temptation. But how can this also be true? that the long and bloudie persecution vnder Traian for fourteene yeares, should be called but *an houre of temptation*? *Ans.* First, in regard of God, to whom a thousand yeares are but as one day, therefore fourteene yeares is but a short time. Secondly, in regard of eternall punishment in hell which we deserue, this time of persecution is but a short time. Thirdly, in regard of the persecutions of Gods people: *Iacob* serued twice seuen yeares for *Leah*, and they seemed a short time to him, by reason of his affection to her: so the affections that Gods people haue to the Lord, to his word and religion, make them thinke many yeares persecution a short time. *Paule* for his affection and loue

to

Vse 1.

Vse 2.

to Christ, thought eternall damnation but a yeare, a short time. So these in this Church thought this long and bloody persecuti-
on, a short time, an houre, for that loue they had to Christ and his
Gospell, and the glory of God; and for this affection could haue
bene content to suffer it longer. The end why Christ vseth this
phrase, is to comfort this and al other Churches in persecutions,
by the shortnes of their continuance, which is but *an houre*; a
short time. Now though they last twentie yeares, yet if we haue
any affection to Gods glory and to his religion, it will be but an
houre, a short time. This consideration of the shortnes of time,
might incourage any man, and arme him to endure any perse-
cution, crosse, or affliction. Besides this which I haue said, note
that in these words there is a prediction: there is a prediction
of a thing to come, namely, *an houre of temptation*. Here Christ
foretellet a thing, not present, but to come, though not known
to the Church, and that without the helpe of any creature, man
or Angel: which prophecyng of this persecution vnder *Traian*,
sheweth that he is true God: for it is a propertie and priuiledge
of God simply, of, by, and from himselfe, without helpe of any
creature, foreseeing of things in their courses, to foretell a
thing to come. Men cannot foretell any thing, vnlesse it be pre-
sent in the causes, not simply. Then here we must know the cause
why this persecution came to them rather then peace, and why
Christ foretold it rather then peace. The cause why Christ saith,
this houre of temptation shall come, is not any foreknowledge
of Christ, or because he foretellet it: for things come to
passe, not because God foretellet and knoweth them: but be-
cause they be to come to passe, therefore he foreseeeth them and
foreknoweth them.

The cause then why things come to passe, is the will, good
pleasure, & decree of God. *Act. 2. 23.* Christ was put to death by
the eternall counsell and decree of God: so it was Gods will and
pleasure, not his foreknowledge, or foreseeing, that this persecu-
tion came on this church: and the decree of God in the effecting
of all things, is the highest cause by which all things come to
passe, and that giueth being to al other causes. *Obiect.* Then God
is the author of sin. *Answer.* As Gods will and decree in the effe-

thing of things, is in the highest place: so must we distinguish of the things he willeth; for he willeth some things which he effecteth himselfe, as all good things: some things he willeth, and yet doth not effect them, but onely permits them to be done by other: as sin and euill things, which though they come not from his will, yet they be according to his will, not against his will; for his will disposeth off sin and euill things; and in all things, good or euill, his will disposeth and setteth downe the causes and circumstances of place, time, maner, how, the end, &c.

vñ. Then their opinion is false, which hold that certaine things (as sin) come to passe, God onely foreseeing them, not decreeing them to come to passe, or permitting them. Now to giue God a bare foreseeing without decreeing, is to rob him of his Godhead, and to take from him his prouidence, by which he disposeth of all things, seeing euery thing which is done cometh to passe by his will and decree, he either decreeing and effecting it, as all good things, or permitting it, as euill things.

The end why Christ alleageth this prophecie, is to expound the former words, namely, why he called the time of persecution a *temptation*, because it should certainly come to trie the whole earth. Where we may note the propertie of any affliction, persecution, or crosse, namely to trie a man, to discerne what is in his heart, whether there be grace and feare of God, or hypocrisie. And for this end is the crosse sent to men, to make knowne either their faith or hypocrisie. And there is nothing better to trie the heart of man then temptation and affliction: and then though thy heart was full of presumption before, thou maist know what is in thee, and iudge of thy selfe.

Verse 11. Behold, I come shortly. Here is Christs commaundement: in it note first the occasion it selfe: secondly, the reason to inforce it. The commaundement, *Hold fast*, namely, with both hands, as for life and death. If thou haue receiued a litle measure of grace, rather part with any thing then with it, keepe it and preserve it till death: but of this before.

The reasons to inforce this commaundement, are two: one before, the other after. The first, *Behold, I come shortly.* I wil come to thee shortly, either by generall iudgement, or else by particular

lar iudgement by death. Now before it Christ puts a word of attentio, to shew that this comendement is not to be lightly passed ouer of vs, but to be earnestly and often remembred. Now seeing Christ teacheth vs that he will come shortly to vs in iudgement, general or particular, we must belecue him, and often haue it in memory, that Christ is not far off, but wil come to vs shortly, to shew our estate either in beauen or hell. Then we must belecue it, haue it written in our hearts and in our memories, and not flatter our selues: we must not say, that Christ will deferre his coming: he teacheth vs that he is at the doore, he cometh shortly, either by generall iudgement of all men, or particular iudgement to vs. Then happy were we if we could (as that auncient father did) thinke we heare his trumpet sound continually in our eares, and thinke in our hearts, and remember this, that Christ wil not be long, but will come very shortly. And indeed the cause why men liue in sin, & neuer call them selues to an account, is, because men belecue not, and haue not learned this lesson, that Christ wil thus come shortly. If me were thus perswaded in hart, Christ will come to me shortly, to iudge me, giue me my reward in heauen or hell, surely if they belonged to God, it would make them turne to him from their sinnes, and breake off their wicked life; nay though a man were most desperate, yet this wold make him tremble, to thinke how Christ will come shortly to iudge him: yea it wold make me if they had any spark of grace, to labor to get faith and a good conscience. Seeing the Christ is to come to iudge them shortly, who would not repent? who would not leaue his sins and turne to Christ, vnlesse he will cast his soule away? Then this is our duty to labour to get faith and a good conscience, to iudge our selues, that we may preuent Christs iudgement. Again, this very consideration will make a man constant in all Christian duties: and lastly it wil comfort such as be in affliction, for they may be sure their affliction shall not last alway, for Christ will come to iudgement shortly, and he will free them from all their crosses, and he will ere it be long giue them deliuerance.

Now followeth the reason after the commaundement. *That no man take thy crowne from thee*: that is, the crowne of glorie.

namely, life euerlasting: for he speaketh not onely to the Angell as though he spake of the crowne of the ministry, but it is spoken to the whole Church, *Hold fast*, lest if thou hold not fast, thy crowne of euerlasting life prouided for thee, be taken from thee, and thou be bereft of it. Hence againe some gather, that a man ordained to eternall life may perish. But it is not here said absolutely & simply, that any shall loose his crown, but conditionally; if thou hold not fast eternall life prouided for thee, it shall be taken from thee. Now out of this conditionall speech no man can gather, that a child of God may fall and be damned, for that is not the end of such conditionall speeches in the word, but to shew a mans weaknes, that if a man be left to himselfe, he cannot but perish; for the child of God in himselfe being left to himselfe, he cannot stand, but must needs fall away and perish. So that the Lord here biddeth them hold fast, and telleth them, if they were left to themselves they could not but perish; not to shew, that any of the truly conuerted should perish. Again, the end of this conditionall speech is, to make this Church perseuere, not to shew they should fall away: for the end of all such threatnings and admonitions, be to make men labour to perseuere in faith and a good conscience to the end, to make them constant, not to signifye their backe-sliding: for as the Lord hath appointed men to saluation certainly, so he hath appointed the meanes: now the meanes argueth not a falling away, but perseuerance to the end.

And another take it. He saith not, it shall be lost, but lest thou loosing it, and not regarding it, another haue it, it be vouchsafed to some other. Whereby we see, when the Lord taketh grace from any man or people, he hath other men and people to bestow it on. When *Iudas* fell, *Matthias* was chosen. When the Iewes fell, he had Gentiles to entertaine his Gospell: and when one people refuse his grace, he hath another instead of them to receiue it. We here are the people of God, and haue the word, and the seales thereof, namely the sacraments: now if we abuse them, he will take them from vs, and bestow them on a people which wil make more of them. Then we haue no cause to brag that we are Gods children, but rather must labour to obey his word,

word, to vse his Sacraments reuerently, else he will take them from vs, put off our crowne, and make vs a barbarous and brutish people, giuen to all idolatrie. O then let vs hold these fast with both hands; let all go, honour, riches, preferment, pleasures and our owne life, ere we loose our glorious crowne of the Gospell of Christ: for if we wil not hold it fast, he will giue it to a nation, which though now we cōtemne, yet they shall scorn & hisse at vs. And now that we heare of warres and innasions, let these put vs in mind of greater iudgement, and assure vs that if we make not more accompt of the word and Sacraments, and not only professe outwardly in bōdie, but in the seruice of God ioyne heart and hand, be indeed as good professors as we beare the world in hand we are, the Lord will remoue our crowne, and giue it to a nation which will bring forth better increase, and seeke to maintaine it better.

Verse, 12. Him that ouercometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God. Here is set downe the promise, which containeth two things: first, to whom the promise is made, *to him that ouercometh*: secondly, the thing promised in the words following. For the first, he giueth to vnderstand, that whosoever will haue his seruice pleasing vnto God, must dispose himselfe to fight a good fight, and to wage battell against all his enemies. A man cannot be a good Christian, except he be a good souldier: when he beginneth to turne to God, then he hath innumerable enemies, both within himselfe, and without, to make him take another course, and turne from God: now if he be not a good souldier, these enemies will overcome him.

For the second, the thing promised is *sternall life*: in these words: *I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.* Christ here alludeth to men in this world, who haue bene wont to build pillars vpon hills and mountaines, that the posteritie to come might remember them when they were dead and rotten. 1. Sa. 18. 18. *Abisalom* in his life had reared him vp a pillar, which is in the kings dale: for he said, I haue no sonne to keepe my name in remembrance. This then is the sense: It is the custome of men, to set vp pillars for the remembrance of their bodies: but I will make the man himselfe that ouercometh, a pillar.

In the temple. That is, in the Church triumphant, figured by the temple at Ierusalem: as if he should say: Others set vp pillars in fields and mountaines, but I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.

I will make him a pillar. That is, I will not onely make him a part, but a worthie part in the temple.

My God. This is set downe to shew, that God is Christs God, as he is Mediator: otherwise as he is God the second person, he is equall to the Father.

And he shall go no more out. First, he shall abide a pillar for euer, he shall not need renewing as the pillars of men do. This pillar shall haue three names: first, the name of God: whereby he doth signifie, that he is the seruant of God. Secondly, *the name of the citie of my God.* By citie is not meant the triumphant Church, but the place thereof: namely, the high heauens. The meaning of it is; I will make it manifest, that he is a citize of the place of glorie. This citie is described in the words following; by a resemblance it is called new Ierusalem, because that was a citie that resembled Paradise where *Adam* was. *New Ierusalem.* But how can it be called new Ierusalem, seeing it was before the earthly Ierusalem? *Ans.* It is called new, not in regard of the being, but in regard of reuelation: for it was before the beginning of the world.

Which came downe out of heauen from my God. It is not said, it shall come downe, but it *is* come downe. This clause is added to answer to an obiection, which he that ouercometh might make, thus: Heauen is farre off; how can heauen come downe from heauen? *Ans.* It cometh downe to vs by the preaching of the Gospell: for by it we begin to be citizens thereof. *Eph. 2.*

The third name is *my new name.* By the name of Christ we are to vnderstand glorie and power. *Ob.* But Christ had glorie and power from all eternitie. *Ans.* True, he had so: but this is to be meant as he is God incarnate. Now the ends and reasons which made him describe the estate of life euermlasting, are these: first, to comfort them which keep faith and a good conscience, he doth describe the reward thereof, being an excellent meanes to incourage men to go forward in the faith. Learne we then

in all our afflictions, to keepe this faith and good conscience to the end, by beholding the estate of life euerlasting, and the reward thereof. *Moses* desired to suffer afflictions, because he had respect to the recompence of the reward. The second reason of this description, is, to bring men to view the excellencie of life euerlasting. Many men are drawne from religion, because they take such pleasure in earthly matters: which they would not, if they thought eternall life so great a matter. The third reason is, to teach men to practise *Pauls* rule in the 1. to *Tim.* 6. 12. to lay hold on eternall life. Men with both hands lay hold on the world, both of honour and riches, none layeth sure hold of life euerlasting, though it be neuer so sweet, pleasant, blessed, and glorious. The fourth reason is: to make the people of God not to feare the cruell death that can be, seeing bodily death is a doore to glory. Thus much generally of the twelfth verse: now it followeth that I speake particularly.

Heb. 11. 26.

I will make him a pillar. That which the seruants of God shall *vs. 1.* be in the Church triumphant, that they must beginne to be in the Church militant. If therefore thou wouldest be a pillar in heaven, thou must begin to be one on earth, by vpholding and maintaining the Gospell. Againe, in that he saith, *I will make him a pillar* in Ierusalem, that is, the Church triumphant, they must learne to amend their erroneous opinion, who thinke euery Church as holy as Ierusalem, and is to haue the same reuerence.

And I will write vpon him. That is, he shall haue God for his God. Here he giueth vs to vnderstand, that we can haue no fellowship with God but by Christ, God will neuer saue nor blesse vs out of Christ his Sonne. If therefore thou wilt giue thanks to God, thou must do it through Christ: if thou wilt receiue any temporall blessing of God, it must be in and by, not out of Christ.

I will make him a citizen of the kingdome of heauen. Here we must learne to carrie our selues in this world as citizens of heauen, and not of this world, otherwise we can neuer looke for heauen. *Phil.* 3. 20.

I will make heauen come downe. Here we may see the mercie

of God to man: heauen was shut vp by our sinnes, but God hath opened it by the blood of Christ, that we might enter therein. Therefore if we will haue the *new name*, we must become new creatures: for neither circumcision nor vncircumcision auaieth any thing, but a new creature: if we content our selues with the old man, we shall neuer come to heauen.

Vers. 13. Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirit saith to the Churches.

This is the last part of the Epistle written to the Church of Philadelphia. Now whereas Christ againe and againe repeatech the same words, the Ministers of the Gospell haue a warrant if they preach the same Sermon to the people, yea though they preach it oftentimes. But they must looke that they do it not for ease, but for the good of the Church. And therefore the hearers hearing the Minister repeate the same doctrine, ought not curiously to reprehend him: for then they may as well reprehend Christ himselfe, as before I haue shewed. Here then is a dutie commaunded: namely, to heare: this hearing is the good learning that bringeth true faith, saluation, and sincere obedience with it. But to whom is this commandement giuen? To hearing hearers, and to such as do not onely receiue the word of God with their outward eares, but with the eare that is in the heart. Hence we learne, first, that God doth not giue to all men grace to heare his word to their saluation. Secondly, that we must so heare, that thereby we may be conuerted and changed. But what is to be said? namely, what the spirit teacheth to the Churches. That we might heare attentiuely, he vseth a double reason: one drawne from the speaker: another from the auditors, to wit, the Churches. But I haue spoken of these before.

Vers. 14. And to the Angell of the Church of the Laodiceans write, &c.

As before all the other Epistles, so before this last Epistle, there is a commandement giuen to John to write it. And the Epistle hath three parts, as the former had: first, a Preface: secondly, the matter: thirdly, a conclusion. First, of the Preface, wherein Christ is described (in whose name it was penned) by two arguments.

First, by his name and title, *Amen, a faithfull witness.*

Secondly,

Secondly, by his priuiledge and propertie, *the beginning of the creatures.*

Amen, is an Aduerb of affirmation or asseueration, signifying *truly, verily, &c. certainly.* The reason why he is so called, is rendred in the words that follow, which are a commentary and full exposition of this, *The faithfull witnesse, &c.* So that to this end he is called *Amen*, to shew that he is a true and faithfull witnesse. See chap. 1. 5. there I expound it. And here I will repeate the heads onely of that exposition.

He is called *a witnesse*, betweene God the father and vs, because he doth not onely reueale the fathers will to vs, but sealed it with his blood, and giueth vs many testimonies inward and outward: but of all testimonies, that of the Scripture is most certaine. And for these three respects he is thus termed: first, because he doth reueale it, and seale it, and ratifie it, by inward and outward testimonies: secondly, because he wold accomplish his fathers wil. 2. Cor. 1. 20. *All the promises of God are in him, yea and Amen:* that is, most certaine, and therefore he is a witnesse, yea a faithfull witnesse. Thirdly, he is called a true witnesse, because he speaketh the truth: that which he reuealeth from his father, is the will of his father, who is truth it selfe: he saith as the thing is, without error or falshood, nay his will is the rule of all truth. This is the meaning of the first argument.

Now the vse and the end why here Christ is so called, if we do but reade the Epistle and marke the contents, we may guesse probably at the end: which is, that he might shew himselfe an example to the Angell of that Church, who was slacke and negligent in his ministry, therefore Christ instructs him how to carry himself without respect of persons, teaching the word of God truly and faithfully. See chap. 1. 5. And not only to the Angel, but to all the Church, yea to all Christians, he propounds himselfe an example of two worthy vertues, faith and truth: he would haue all to be true and faithfull in their life and conuersation, euen as he is. This faith is a vertue, whereby a mans word becometh as sure as an obligation, as we vse to speake, whereby we make good all our words, othes and promises.

Truth is that whereby a man without lying, deceit, or fraud

speake the truth from his heart, that (I say) which is necessary to be knowne for his owne and others good, and for the glory of God.

Set we this example before our eyes, and as Christ is a true and faithfull witnesse, so let vs be carefull to shew our selues true in all our words and speeches, and to be faithfull in all our promises. These be excellent graces in Christ, and fruites of the spirit in Christians, therefore let vs be knowne by these to be like Christ. The second end of this title, is to induce this Church to apply it selfe to the word of God effectually; for it was faultie in this point: therefore that he might bring them to this, he saith that he is a faithfull witnesse.

How should they do this? Thus: consider in the word the law and the Gospell, the commaundements, promises and threatnings, and apply them particularly every man to himselfe: the commaundements to know sinne, the threatnings to humble vs; and that we may be touched in conscience, and made fit to receive Gods grace: see an example of it, *Luke 15.* in the prodigall son: *I haue sinned, and am not worthy, &c.* So *Daniel* and *Ezra* humbled themselves. No man can truly be humbled till he make this particular application of the word which he readeth and heareth.

Now the Gospell also must be thus applied: we are bound to beleue the promises of life eternal, not onely that they are true, but to apply them to our selues. The Gospell requireth a further thing, which is the foundation of the church: for prooffe see *Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.* The summe is this, he esteemes all things losse in regard of Christ, and desires the righteousness which is by faith in Christ, and to know the vertue of Christs resurrection. Now marke the fifteenth verse: let so many as be perfect be thus minded, teaching every one of vs our dutie, to apply Christ to our owne person. Thus are we bound in conscience to apply the Gospell to our selues: and whosoever doth not so, he makes God a lier, as much as in him lieth. 1. *Iohn 5.* And this is the principall end and reason why Christ calleth himselfe so, that men might not onely beleue the word in general, but apply it in particular to themselves. The not doing of this, is the cause of negligence in

in religion, of so many luke-warme Christians and professors. Therefore let vs all learne this dutie. It is not enough to know the word, no nor to be able to teach it, but aboue al things to lay it to the conscience, to apply it, that we may be truly humbled and turne to God: therefore iustifying faith is that which applieth in particular.

Now the second title of Christ, is *the beginning of all creatures*, Col. 1. 16. By him all things were created in heauen and earth: therefore in regard of creation he is so called. Yet I doubt not but there is a further cause why he is so called here, namely, because he is the beginning of the new creatures as *Ephes. 1. 10.* where it is said, we are Gods workmanship, created in Christ to good workes. Marke there euery Christian is a workmanship of God. To this purpose *Esay 53. 10.* saith, whe Christ shal giue him selfe a free will offering, he shall see his seed. How? Thus: All that are borne anew, they are the seed of Christ, he is the beginning and roote, and so much the very scope of this Epistle declareth. Now he is such a beginning two waies, first as he is the author of regeneration, for whosoeuer is borne anew, Christ is the cause and author of his conuersion. Therefore *Esay 9. 6.* he is called the father of eternitie, because he doth regenerate men to life by his spirit, and *Esay 8. 18.* he saith, *Loe here I am, and the children that thou hast giuen me.*

Secondly, as he is the matter thereof, *Ephes. 5.* the Church is flesh and bone of Christ, where the Apostle alludeth to the creation of our first parents: for *Adam* was a figure of a man regenerate: and as *Eue* had her beginning from *Adams* side, so the Church and euery Christian haue their being and beginning from Christ: from his blood springs the Church of God and all Christians, as they are new creatures and regenerate, not as they are men and women.

Now the end why he is so called, is to meete with a vice in that and other Churches. Men haue more care and desire to seeme to be Christians, then to be Christians indeed: men set more by a shew, then truth, shadow, then substance. Therefore he shewes that their principall care must be to be true Christians indeed, & not to seeme so only. This church was not regenerate

in that church, and therefore Christ tels them of it, that he is the beginning of new creatures. And the same is our fault, our care is not so much for the power of godlines, as for the shew of it: therefore I beseech you haue care of this: to heare the word and to receiue the sacraments are good things in their kind, but they are not sufficient to saluation: except thou become a true member of Christ, thou hast no good by them.

2 He saith this to meete with another vice, that is, spiritual pride. He shewes that there is no excellencie in outward things, all earthly excellencies are nothing without this, wherby a man is a new creature: therefore we must not stand vpon our pantofles for our birth or gentry: but whosoever wil reioyce, must reioyce in this, that he hath Christ for the author of his regeneration.

Further, this teacheth vs an excellent lesson, that Christ loueth and preferueth his church, for as it was in the first *Adam*, so it is in the second *Adam*. The woman had not her beginning apart from man, but of and from him, that he might loue her the better, and haue care of her preseruatiou. So this is to teach vs, that Christ hath a care of vs, and that we must honor him. Nay, which is more, *Adam* was but the matter onely, and not the author of *Henuah*, but Christ is both to the church, to shew his loue to be endlesse. The root neuer hurts the branches, nay it strengtheneth it selfe to defend, cherish, and maintaine the branches: it hath no affection, inclination or disposition to hurt, but to helpe. Thus much of these words, to note the bond betweene Christ and his church, yea his loue and our dutie.

Hence I gather, that the Papists erre, in teaching that a man hath the vse of his owne will in his regeneration, and that he can dispose himselfe in his iustification: for a creature cannot worke nor help to create himself: but euery regenerate person is a creature of God, and the conuersion of a sinner is here made the creation of a man: the creature in his owne creation is able to do nothing. If there were no more such sayings in the Bible, this one were sufficient to confute that opinion. And thus much of the preface. Now the matter of the Epistle or contents and substance.

Verse 15. *I know thy workes, &c. that thou art neither hotte nor cold,*

hote, &c. The Proposition hath two parts. First, a dispraise, or reproofe. Secondly, counsell. The dispraise is for two faults: the first, lukewarmnesse: the second, pride and vanitie of mind. Then first, I will make the words plaine: secondly, declare the vſe of them. *I know*: that is, all thy waies and workes be manifest to me, and I vtterly dislike them. And to lay open their fault the more, he borroweth a comparifon from water; whereof there be these three sorts, hote, cold, and warme.

Cold and hote water may be receiued into the stomack with lesse hurt and annoyance: but the water that is lukewarme troubleth the stomacke, and ceaseth not till it be cast vp againe.

Now with these three kinds of water, he compareth three sorts of men. By cold men, vnderstand the enemies of religion, as Iewes and Gentiles, Turkes and Saracens, Gadarens and Galileans.

By hote, vnderstand men zealous in religion: by lukewarm, indifferent. So the meaning is, thou art neither an open enemy of religion, nor yet truly religious, or a true friend.

I would, &c. Christ here maketh a wish: but he doth not simply wish, that they were enemies of religion: but in respect of their estate, he wisheth they were either of those, rather then as they were. Otherwise this absurditie would follow, that Christ should wish them to be of a people no people of God. By lukewarmnesse, he vnderstandeth a people professing the word of God, and yet not greatly regarding and reuerencing it. This people is a lukewarme people: as if he should say, a mixture of both, neither hote nor cold, wanting the heate of grace, and the fire of Gods spirit, whereby their hearts should be heated and inflamed.

Vers. 16. Because thou art neither, &c. The meaning is this. Euen as a man that hath receiued such water, will cast it vp, and cannot keepe it in: so Christ being grieved with their sinnes will cast them off from hauing any fellowship with him, and make them to be no Church. This is the true and right meaning of the words. Now in them these things are contained.

First, Christ setteth downe their fault, and aggrauateth it. Secondly, he compareth three kinds of men together.

The hote man hath the best place, and the cold man the second, and the lukewarme man the last and lowest. So you see the enimie of religion and of Gods grace, is better then he that professeth religion, and liueth not thereafter. As if he should say, the ordinarie Gospeller which contenteth himselfe to heare the word, and to receiue the Sacraments, is not so good before God, as the Turke and Jew. The threatning followeth: *I will spue them out of my mouth.*

Now hauing found the meaning, we must examine our selues whether we may not be charged with the same fault: and it will be found that we are guiltie of this, and euen plaine Laodiceans. Which that you may see, I will shew diuerse kinds of such lukewarme Gospellers and Christians,

1 The Papist though he seeme to make a great shew of loue to Christ, yet he performeth no such thing: for he parteth stakes with Christ, and maketh himselfe to be his owne sauour: so that howsoeuer he pretend to be a most zealous Catholike, yet he hath no true grace,

2 The Temporizer, he which altereth his religion as times alter. And such is the bodie of our people, and they are not ashamed to confesse it, that they will follow the Prince, and change their religiō with the time. And this sheweth what men will do, if Poperie come againe: they may say they are good Christians, but they shew themselues plaine Laodiceans.

3 All such as follow *Nicodemus*: that is, which loue Christ, but dare not come to him by day light: such as thinke they may heare Masse, and yet keepe their conscience to themselves, halting betwixt God and *Baal*.

4 Such as are mediators and pacificators, and would make an vnion betweene vs and the Papists, being perswaded that our religion and the Papists are all one in effect, for the matter and substance of it: and that all the difference is only in circumstance, so they write and defend their opinion: but let them pretend what they will, zeale of Gods glorie, or whatsoeuer, be it neuer so much, they are but Laodiceans. A fitt sort there is, and who are they? *Luk. 16.* Such as serue God and Mammon. And where are they? nay, where are they not? Lamentable

ble is our time, wherein men will needes be professors, and yet how is all their time spent vpon care for this world? The greatest part of their life and time is bestowed on that; there is all their ioy, care, desire, labour and studie: let them say what they will, so long as their care and studie is spent vpon Mammon, they are very Laodiceans. And such are the most part of our hearers, they draw neare God with their lippes, but their hearts are vpon their goods; the whole heart is set vpon the world, and the whole time of their liues is spent in this. Who they are, your owne consciences will tell you, they are indeed Christians & professors, but lukewarme, and worse then Christs enemies.

6 They that heare the word and like it, but in their liues giue themselves to sinnes, blasphemie, drunkennesse, fornication, oppression, vsurie, some to this vice, some to that. And euen in this very ranck I place those which profess religion, but yet delight in the fond and irreligious fashions of the world, vsing the new, strange and monstrous fashions of apparell: they spend so much time vpon their bodies, that the soule goeth naked. The world aboundeth with such now, yong and old. It is strange to see how absurd men are, beyond all common reason, in apparelling themselves so fondly, whereas their garments shold put them in mind of their owne shame and nakednesse, & be no cause of glorying in them. And the modest garments shold shew the vertues of the mind: now what do they else but shew the vanities and vices of our minds?

Now, shall we excuse our selues, though we be none of these, ^{vz.} nor intangled with the sinnes of the world? No, we cannot. We shall find wants, of the feare of God, of hatred of sinne, of the reuerend regard and estimation of the Gospel, which we ought to haue: so as no man can say, he is free from this: nay, euery man euen he that hath best grace, shall feelee in himselfe want of care and loue to God and his word. Therefore we must with *Iob* lay our hands vpon our mouthes, and say, we are vile.

Well, this being so, now consider the iudgement threatened, lay it before your eyes, marke the end and recompence: Christ will *spue such out of his mouth*, that is, cast them from God, from Christ and his Church. This threatening pertaineth to this age,

and therefore we must tremble, and be ashamed, and repent of this sinne, lest ere long we be spued out of his mouth. Thus much of the examination of this sinne.

Now of the amendment of it. Where note, first, the fault: secondly, the greatnesse of it: thirdly, the punishment: that is, a separation from the Church. Now I will proceed further to shew, that euen among vs, as well as in other places, this sinne is to be found, that euery one may be the better acquainted with his owne state. And this appeareth by diuerse signes.

First, by common neglect of the duties of Religion, which is manifested diuerse waies: first, though we come often and greedily to the Church, yet very few profit in knowledge, and fewer in amendment of life: and many that profit in knowledge something, do thrise in obedience litle or nothing at all. How true this is, I appeale to euery mans conscience. This is an euident argument of great negligence in all sorts. Take the bodies of our congregations, & they be as ignorant as any. I know there be some which profit both in knowledge and practise: but I speake of the greatest part. Experience in diuerse occasions maketh this manifest.

The second token of this negligence, is, that few spend any time in reading of the word, to search the Scriptures, & try whether it be as they are taught or not: nay, few will be, at the cost to buy a Bible; or if they haue one, they will not take the paines to reade in it, or to keepe a constant course in reading of it daily.

A third signe, is the prophanation of the Sabbath; though many come to Church at the time appointed for publike worship and seruice, yet there is no priuate sanctification of it at home: but when the congregation is dissolued, men betake themselues to their owne affaires, profits, delights and pleasures. No such persons can possibly haue any great measure of knowledge, or obedience and grace, because they do not keepe times for this purpose. By these signes it is plaine and euident, yea palpable, that there is great negligence in the duties of Religion. Now where there is such negligence, though coldnesse be wanting, yet there is no heate, and we are but lukewarme Gospellers. Another sign of lukewarmnesse, is this: our religion

stands

stands on generals, and reacheth not to our particular callings. In the church we are good Christians, but when we come home to the particular duties of our priuate callings, where is religion then? where is the practise of that we heare? There is no conscience made of lying, deceiuing, & oppressing; & no care of that good dealing which ought to be in men. Al our religion is in the church, and none at home. Whereas if religion were in the hart, it would shew some fruit in our liues: as fire and heate cannot be hidden. Although I doubt not but there be some of whom these sins take no hold, yet there be many which professe that they be neither hot nor cold, but in a meane between both, and yet they will be partakers of the word and sacraments: and when they see any haue care to obey, they haue presently the name of preciseness ready for them, because they haue care to do that which they professe. In this very reproch they shew, that they are luke-warme, their mouthes proclaime it, and their liues professe it, and they are neuer a whit ashamed of it. Whosoever opens his mouth to fasten this reproch vpon his neighbor, he fastens vpon himselfe this marke of luke-warmnesse without shame. And so they go beyond the Laodiceans which were ashamed of it, and would not defend it, whereas these boast of it. My meaning is, not to fasten this vpon euery man, but I say it is a common sin, more then any other.

Well now, it being manifest, that this is the common sinne of vs. our time, yea our common sin, a sin that taketh hold of all sorts: mark what followeth, they are in a worse case then the heathen and Infidels are. The common Christian is worse in some case then they, for Christ preferreth them before these. A man may perswade himselfe that he is in a good estate for all that: but you see Christs iudgement & sentence: O, it had bin better for them neuer to haue knowne the truth at all. They are in a worse case which know Godswill and obey it not, then they that neuer knew it. Let vs not deceiue our selues then: if we be but drowsie Protestants, we are worse then Turkes. We boast of our estate, and we despise the Infidels, but except thou ioyne with knowledge, purpose of obedience, thou art more vile and contemptible then they: Publicans and harlots shall come into heauen.

before thee: it is not the external profession of religion that will make thee better then they; but grace in the heart and obedience. And this is the first point.

The second point is, that we are in danger to be *spued out of Christs mouth*: for this was written for our instruction, and for all Churches: that as luke-warme water troubleth mens stomackes, so do we trouble Christ, and therefore are like to be cast out euen as that is. We may flatter our selues, and thinke all is well, as they did in *Noahs* time: but know it, we are in danger of a most grieuous iudgement, namely, to be cut off from Christ, & to be made no people. Though we had no more sins but this, we are in danger to be cut off for it. And God can do this diuers wayes, either by taking his Gospell from vs, or sending in our enemies among vs. And, by example of other countries, the Lord sets this before our eyes daily, how he can and will do this: therefore let vs not stand vpon any outward priuiledge, but lay this to our hearts. And so much for the first sin. The second vice followeth in the seuenteenth verse.

Verse. 17. Thou saist I am rich, &c. Here is a new reproofe of a new fault, and that is spiritual pride. These words depend on the former, as a reason and cause: for before they were charged with luke-warmnesse. Now the cause of that is pride: this is the mother, that is the daughter.

Thou saist. That is, thou thinkest thus. It is the maner of the holy Ghost to expresse the thoughts of men by speeches; and when men thinke thus and thus, the holy Ghost saith, they say thus and thus: because, as manifest as our speeches be to one another, so manifest be our thoughts to Christ.

v². In that Christ doth thus expresse mens thoughts, we may gather that this booke is canonical: for men cannot set downe in writing what be their owne thoughts, much lesse other mens. And so in all the bookes of Scripture the thoughts and imaginations of men are set downe; euen as they conceiue them: the like cannot be shewed in any writings of men. It remaineth therefore that we receiue this booke as the word of God. For, could the Apostle *Iohn* by any art or learning come to know their thoughts? No.

Now

Now I come the thought. He expresseth their pride by the effect of it, that is, their thought: and what is their thought?

I am rich. That is, I abound with spirituall graces, as knowledge, iudgement, understanding and memory. By this thought Christ describeth their pride, not outward, but inward; not carnal, but spiritual, whereby they perswaded themselves, that they were in much better case and state then they were. And this is the common sin of churches. Against this sin of pride, learne we that Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. But what, is there any righteous since *Adams* fall? No: but some thinke themselves righteous, as did the proud Pharises, which said as the Church of *Laodicea* here, *I am rich.* And *Paul* brings in the Corinthians, saying, *We shall raigne.* Thus you see that this hath bin a common sin, and so it is at this time.

In the popish Churches this opinion takes place, when they perswade themselves to satisfie Gods iustice for temporall punishments by their workes, and that they can merite sufficiently for themselves and others.

And amongst vs this wretched thought finds harbour. We thinke we abound with knowledge, none will seeme to be ignorant or to want knowledge, and therefore not one of a hundred will aske a question: nay, many therefore will not heare the word, because they know as much for substance as the Preacher can tell them; for all a mans dutie (say they) is but to feare God and keepe his commandements; and thou shalt loue God aboue all, and thy neighbour as thy selfe: and what would you more?

Thus they perswade themselves, that they are rich, and want no knowledge, when they know not one principle of religion more then the law of nature teacheth them, namely, *Do as you would be done to.* Others pleade that they haue had euer since they could remember such a strong faith, that they neuer doubted of Gods mercy. But this is no strong faith, but a strong presumption, and a strange faith: for true faith is alway ioynd with doubting and distrusting. Others professe, that they are rich in loue, and they will not be drawne from it, but they loue God and their neighbours, when they haue neither knowledge, faith,

Deut. 29. 19.

nor loue. Which appeareth thus: let a man make relation of any bodily calamitie, and you are astonished, but let the Ministers tel you that you are in danger of spirituall iudgement, and who is afraid? where is the person that trembleth? Worldly newes troubleth you, but the word neuer scares you, the remembrance of your owne damnable estate grieueth you not. Let vs say what we will of your soules state, alas you regard it not, but the drunkard will continue in his drunkennesse, and the adulterer and blasphemor in their wickednesse, and euery man blesteth himselfe in his sins, and saith God loues him, and he loues God, I am rich in regard of Gods fauour, of spirituall blessings, &c. This being our sin, it stands vs all in hand to labour to see it, and to be humbled for it.

Increased in wealth, or made rich, This is added only for amplification, to shew the measure of their pride, that it was not small, but great: therefore the word is doubled to shew the strength of their conceipt, and the greatnesse of their pride. Now what is the cause why they were not onely puffed vp, but giuen to such an high degree of pride? *Answer*. Knowledge was the cause, for no doubt but the Angell of that Church had great knowledge, and was a learned man, and the people were well instructed. Now knowledge puffeth vp, it maketh mens hearts to swell with pride; therefore it is true, that where much knowledge is, there is much pride, if men want the grace of humiliation, and grieve for sinne.

And haue need of nothing. Here is a further marke and token of their pride: when a man thinks thus, that he needs no help for his saluation, if he stands in no need of Christs blood for the saluation of his soule, this is a notable signe of abundant pride in the heart. This serueth further, to conuince our congregation of this pride, for if we be neuer so litle sicke, straight we seeke to the Physitians; but though our soules be neuer so sicke, none seeke to the Ministers: sicknesses we feele, but not sins, therefore the Physitian is in request, but the Minister is not thought of till the pangs of death be felt. This shewes that we abound in spirituall pride: therefore marke this, you must labour to feele what need you haue of Christ; for til you do so, there is no grace in the heart.

heart. If you would haue grace, learne this, that you want the blood of Christ: and till you feele this, neuer thinke your case good, but wretched and damnable. It is a dangerous case for a man to say, he wanteth nothing.

And knowest not. Here he setteth downe the cause of their pride: that is, ignorance: as if he should say, Thou knowest not thine owne naturall estate, as thou wert borne of *Adam*, thy state out of Christ. Thus we see, that ignorance is the cause of pride, and pride of lukewarmenesse. By this he sheweth what they are ignorant of.

Hence it may be gathered, that *pride was not the first sinne*, nor the roote of all other sinnes, as the Papiſts and some other thinke. Indeed it is a great sinne, and a mother sinne, yet it hath a more inward cause: that is, ignorance. Whereof? euen of a mans owne estate before God: so much Christ here signifieth. The cause why any thinke wel of themselves, and swell in pride, is the ignorance of their owne estate: and because they are ignorant of that, therefore they are puffed vp with pride. By this we must all be admonished, to haue care to learne to know our owne estate, in which we are by nature, without Christ. Euery person that will come to saluation must be thoroughly acquainted with his owne estate, and know his owne sinnes, and the curse due to them: and therefore it is that the Prophets so often call vpon the people to search and sanne themselves, that they might be acquainted with their owne estate. Till you know this, you shall be but proud peacocks, & neuer haue grace: although you haue otherwise very great gifts, of knowledge, and grace to conceiue a prayer, & be able to teach, yet you shall neuer haue any grace to turne and repent truly, till the ignorance of your state be removed: and then cometh grace, true obedience, and humiliation, and other graces needfull for Gods seruice: therefore labour for it. If there be any blemish in your face, you will see it, O then labour to see the spots of your soules.

Now in that Christ doth thus strike at the roote of their pride, and bewray their ignorance, he sheweth the state of euery man by nature: so that here cometh to be handled the naturall estate and miserie of man.

The miserie of this Church is propounded two waies: first, generally: secondly, particularly. Generally, in two words, *wretched and miserable*. Wretched; that is, one subject to misery, griefe, and calamities: so much is signified by the first word. That we may know what this miserie is, I will enter into a description of mans wretchednesse. Where two things must be considered: first, the roote and fountaine of it, namely, originall sinne: which hath two branches: first, that very particular offence and trespasse whereby *Adam* sinned, which is not onely the sinne of his person, but of mans nature, and of euery one that cometh of *Adam*, Christ excepted. Secondly, from that sinne, as a part of it, and yet withall as a punishment of it, followeth the *corruption* of mans heart, and defacing of Gods image, whereby the heart hath got a pronenesse, and disposition, or inclination to all sinne. In these two stand mans miserie: for from these do spring al our miseries, both in and after this life. So much for the first part, what mans miserie is. Againe, we must conceiue it vnder the forme of a punishment. All miserie of what kind soeuer, is a punishment laid vpon man for that first sinne. Now the punishment of sinne must be considered diuerse waies, according to the diuerse times of mans being, either in this world, or departed hence. All punishment is either in this life, or in the end of it, or after: and so is miserie, in this life, in the end of it, or after it. Againe, some miseries concerne the whole man, and they are two principally. First, a subiection to Gods wrath, whereby a man is in daunger thereof euery day, & made a child of wrath. This is a miserie of all miseries, and so much the more grievous, as a man cannot without some grace see it. Secondly, bondage to the diuell: the Scripture speaketh of it oftentimes. You may conceiue it thus: The man regenerate saith, I sin, but I would not sinne: the naturall man saith, I sinne, and I will sinne; it is my nature to sinne, and my pleasure, and in sinne will I live. And these are the two miseries concerning the whole man. Now there be miseries which concerne not the whole man, but the bodie or soule, goods or calling in this life.

Miseries concerning the soule are these. First, in the mind and vnderstanding, there is blindness and ignorance of Gods will.

will. Secondly, in diuerse persons, madnesse and foolishnesse. All these are miseries, curses, and punishments inflicted on mans soule for sin. And further, that nothing can be learned without paines and difficultie. Further, in the mind there is a conscience, and there is accusation, secret feares and terrors; and so many accusations, so many miseries. In the will there is rebellion, and in the affections, peruersenesse; which is not onely a sinne, but a plague and punishment.

And as the soule, so the bodie is subiect to his miseries, to many paines, aches, and diseases. Yea, the diseases of mans bodie are so many, that all Physicke bookes cannot record them. Besides diseases, there is mortalitie: that is, a subiection to death, so as all the art and skill in the world cannot prevent it.

In our goods, the want of necessities is a miserie, and by reason of sinne a punishment, and in it owne nature a curse. And all the hurt that cometh by the creatures, (whereas they be at enmitie betweene themselves, or with men) it is a curse for mans sinne. And in that they be subiect to vanitie too, all is for the punishment of our sinnes. Further, all losses, and damages, and crosses whatsoeuer, and wants of temporall blessings, they are miseries. The like we may say of all callings: for there is none but it is subiect to griefes and vexations; no man can carie himselfe so in any calling, but he shall feelee some woe and miserie.

And as in this life, so in the end of this life, the miserie is bodily death: that is, a separation of the soule from the bodie; which, if man had not fallen, should haue remained vnseparable. This in it owne nature is a fearefull curse: for it is the very gate of hell. And after this life, followeth the full accomplishment of Gods wrath: all the miseries in this life, are but preparations to that. Then cometh destruction endlesse in the place of the damned. For this destruction, is first, a separation from God, and excludeth men from all societie with him: secondly, an apprehension of Gods wrath in the whole man, bodie and soule for ever. Thirdly, it is in the place of the damned, with the diuell and his angels: therefore this miserie is the summe and accomplishment of all miseries, the rest are but beginnings of this. Thus you see what mans miserie is.

Now then considering what is the fountaine of our miserie, originall sin; & what is the nature of miserie, namely, it is a curse and punishment; we see what it is to be wretched and miserable. *Thou art wretched.* That is, tainted with sinne, and subiect to punishment for it, in this life, in the end of it, and after it.

Now touching this generall point, we are to consider the end why Christ saith this: *And knowest not, &c.* Which is, that he might teach them and vs, to learne to know our miserie, and to seele it, and to be touched in conscience for it.

Whosoever shall but lightly reade over this Epistle shall see, that this is the very end of it: for they thought themselves to be highly in Gods fauour, when it was nothing so indeed. I pray you all therefore which are now assembled here, to heare things touching eternall life, and the saluation of your soules, forsake & abandon other conceits, and turne your eyes to this, that you may see what be the miseries to which you are subiect; and when you see them, go further. labour that your hearts may be touched, that you may euen crie out with the men of Ierusalem, *What shall we do?* Till then we shall be like these Laodiceans, neither hote nor cold. We shall neuer haue true and sound religion in vs, till we seele the waight of our miserie. I acknowledge, that the sight of our miserie is Gods grace: but go to the root, and seeke that all pride may be expulsed, and you may embrace the Gospell, which ministreth a remedie for all miserie.

But thou art miserable. This word *miserable* signifieth one that is worthy to be pitied; which he useth to expresse the greatnesse of their misery; meaning that they were so far subiect to misery, that they were to be pitied of all men: so that this is not added to shew any new thing, but to enlarge the former. Learne we hence, that it is not our dutie to disdain a sinner that is in misery, or to reproch & scorn, but to pitie him: the more grievous sinner a man is, the more he is to be pitied. It was *David's* maner so to do, *1 Sam. 16*, and he was so farre from contemning a sinner, that he shed riuers of teares, *Psal. 119. 136*: And *Ezek. 9*, the good man was moued with the bowels of compassion, when the people were sinfull. The like is in *Ier. 9*: It was the *Corinthians* fault, when the incestuous man had sinned; they were neuer

sl. 239.

discreet.

a. cor. 5.

a whit humbled or moued with pitie, but puffed vp with pride and contempt, so that they scorned him, and Paul reprocueth it in them.

And this is a fault in many of vs, that men are not humbled when they see other men sinne, our hearts are not touched with sorow for it, but rather puffed vp. If we haue receiued more grace then other, let vs not despise or scorne them which haue not the like measure. Thus much of their misery in generall. As for the particulars, they are in number three: that he might strike their hearts with a sense of their misery, he is not content to set it downe in generall termes, but enters into particular, names three maine miseries of theirs. The first word signifieth one so poore, that he hath not a rag to his backe, nor a bit of bread to put in his mouth, more then he gets by begging. But here he meaneth spiritual pouertie, which what it is, we shall best vnderstand when we know what is true riches, to wit, the grace and fauour of God in Christ, for the pardō of sins, to life everlasting. So the poore man is he that wants this, that hath no good thing acceptable to God, who in regard of his soule, is as a begger which hath nothing for the maintenance of this temporall life. Thus you haue the meaning of this first word.

Now the end likewise is to be considered why Christ calleth them poore: namely, that they and we might strue to see our pouertie, that we might become poore in spirit: for they thought themselves rich, therefore Christ (to beate downe this conceit, and to prepare them to true grace) tels them they are poore, in regard of grace and life eternall.

And here we are taught a principall point of religion, namely, *to seele our owne pouertie*, that we haue no goodnesse in vs, and therefore to despaire vterly of our saluation in regard of our selues. This is greatly commended in the Scriptures, therefore learne another dutie. As we are by nature poore, and haue no goodnesse in our selues: so labour to see it, and to be out of heart with our selues, that is to be poore in spirit: otherwise you may come to church, heare the word, receiue the sacraments, but neuer haue saluation, or haue spirituall blessings: except you be first acquainted with your poore estate, that you are very beggers.

may more, plaine bankrupts: for so Christ taught vs to pray. *Forgive vs our debts* therefore Christ tels the proud Church of her pouertie, Happie and blessed were our state and condition if we could learne this, and lay aside our pride: for we are so poore, that we must pleade nothing but pardon, no merit or satisfaction. If we did this, then would we esteeme aright of the Gospell, and haue some comfort by it. Now because we haue not this, we do not embrace the Gospell heartily and chearfully as we ought. Carry therefore away this lesson with you, that the beginning of all grace is to feele the want of grace, to acknowledge your pouertie, and to be touched for it, and grieued euen from the bottom of your hearts, & to feele this as sensibly, as the begger feeleth his misery. Deceiue not your selues, Gods word must stand: till you be beggers, the Gospell wil be but a dreame and a fancie to you.

Quest. But how can Christ call her poore, seeing it was a very rich people? *Ans.* It is true indeed, they were very rich, so histories do record: but as it was a rich citie, so it was a poore church; for all the wealth in the world is pouertie, without the fauour of God in Christ: we are complete in Christ, without him we haue nothing. All things are yours, and you Christs; and Christ Gods. All temporall blessings are nothing out of Christ: riches are no riches, honours no honours out of Christ. In Christ we are complete, and therefore rich Laodicea is but a poore and beggerly people; and so are all without Christ.

Therefore if God haue giuen you riches, lay vp a good foundation; vse then for this end, that they may further and not hinder your saluation, as helpes and meanes thereof; otherwise they will be your ruine and destruction. So much for the first part of mans pouertie.

The second part is *Blindnesse*. How can they be said to be blind, they had no doubt an excellent teacher, indued with great knowledge and ability to teach; and I doubt not but the people were well instructed. *Ans.* It cannot be denied but they had great knowledge, yet they are called blind; first, because they knew not their own estate; for though a man had al the skill and knowledge in the world, he were but a blind man without this knowledge.

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knowledge. Secondly, because they knew not God in Christ. They knew God in general, as many do now, but not by a particular application to themselves, that God was their God in Christ, and Christ their redeemer. They were content to know the Gospell generally & confusedly. Thirdly, because they could not vnderstand things that differed. It is a great gift of God to be able to discern things that differ, earthly things from heavenly, and temporall from spirituall, Therefore let vs learne this lesson: All knowledge is but ignorance, if a man know not himselfe, and God to be his God, and Christ his saviour. Let a man be brought vp in the best schooles of learning, and haue the most absolute gifts that can be, though he go beyond all men in diuine and humane knowledge and learning: if he know not himselfe, and his state before God, he knoweth nothing. Christ sets this marke vpon the Angel of this Church, and yet no doubt he was a learned man: but it shewes he had no care to know himself. Therefore content not your selues to haue the knowledge of the Gospell or humane learning, but learne to know that God is thy God, and Christ thy redeemer, and that his blood was shed for thy sins. *Dauid* intitleth the 32. Psal. *his learning*: and yet what great or deepe learning is there, but this, that he is blest which hath the pardon of his sins, which he proueth by his own example. And indeed this seasoneth all learning: when you know Christ: till you do this, you are blind as these were.

The last point of mans misery is *Nakednes*, which is two-fold: first, to the eyes of man: secondly, to the eyes of God. Corporall and bodily nakednesse, is two-fold: first, before the fall, and that was an excellent kind of nakednesse, whereby their bodies being vncouered, were full of glorie, without shame: but that is not meant here. Secondly, since the fall, sinful and shameful nakednesse, where the bodie is full of deformitie, and all parts of it should be couered, but that for necessities sake the face and hands are left bare. Besides this corporall nakednesse, there is a spirituall nakednes, which God seeth and man cannot see, that is when a man lieth open and naked before God: as *Moses* saw the people naked, not that their bodies were vncouered, but their soules rather. Their sin appeared to God, and they in their sins,

Exod. 32. 35.

and so they lay subiect to Gods iudgements. This is spiritual nakednes, a plague of all plagues, and a miserie of all miseries, when God beholds men in their sins.

77.

Now in that Christ saith, this Church was *wretched and miserable*, and a part of her miserie was her *spirituall nakednesse*: we learne diuers instructions: first, not to couer our sins before Gods eyes, for we stand al naked and vncouered before him, The studie and care of most men, is to hide their sins from the world, but few care for couering them that God may not see them. Looke as ye haue seene Lazer-men lay open their nakednes before you, so God seeth your nakednes. Let al carelesse and negligent persons remember this: whosoever considereth this seriouſlie, they will be ashamed to neglect this dutie.

Further, let vs consider the end why Christ saith they were naked. It is that al men might haue care to set themselves before God, and bring themselves into his presence (and not seeke to hide themselves from God as *Adam* did) that they may obtaine a couering. We must al learne to know our owne nakednes, and be perswaded that God seeth al our sins. Then we must be humbled and touched for them: then we must pray for a couering. It was *Danids* practise, *Blessed is the man whose sins are couered*. First he vnfoldes his nakednes, and then intreateth the Lord to couer his sin, giuing vs to vnderstand, that he had laid open his nakednes. So also should we all do, shew the wounds and scars of our soules, that God may giue vs a garment to couer vs. That we may all be partakers of the couering of Christs righteousness, labour to feele your pouertie and nakednes; for till you feele your owne miserie, you are neuer fit for Christ.

Psal. 31. 1.

Further, Christ saith this, to prepare them and vs for the good counsel following: therefore let this be the conclusion. If you haue receiued any grace, labour to increase in it: if not, labour to haue it: learne to know your owne pouerty, blindnes, and nakednes, and to feele it and be touched for it: be humbled seriously and thoroughly. This must be the needle to draw Gods grace through your hearts.

Vers. 18. I counsell thee, &c. Now followeth the counsell of Christ, in the three next verses: in which he propoundeth a most excellent

excellent and sufficient remedie of their miserie, in which note three things: first, the maner of prescribing the remedie, by way of counsell: secondly, the remedie it selfe, *gold, apparell, and eye salve*: thirdly, the means to obtain it, *buy of me*. Of these in order. The maner of prescribing is mild: in it Christ taketh vpon him the person of a Counsellor to his Church: for as God hath his Church and people, so in mercie he giueth them counsell and counsellors. The president of this counsell is Christ. *Prou. 8. 14.* Counsell is mine, saith Wisedome. *Isay 9. 6.* Christ is called that Counsellor. He is both King of and Counsellor to his Church. And surely this title of right belögeth to him: for first, by his office he aduise men how they shall escape eternall death, and be saued: secondly, he teacheth how a man may please God in all his actions: thirdly, how he may sic sinne. These three he doth daily in his church and children, and that not by extraordinarie, but euen by ordinarie meanes; as by his word and spirit, and therefore may well be called our Counsellor: neither can any, either Angell or man, thus counsell vs, but onely Christ.

Now in that Christ is such a person by office and profession, therefore we must acknowledge him to be our Counsellor: yea, the Counsellor of the Catholike Church, and euerie part therof. Therefore we learne to do him all the honour we can. Counsellors of the common law are secd, reuerenced, and honoured for their counsell, though it be but for worldly matters, and it oftentimes faileth. Much more is Christ to be honoured, whose counsell concerneth the things of God, and cannot faile, but shall stand. Nay, as his counsell is infinitely more excellent then the counsell of any other creature, so much more is he to be honoured.

Further; in all dangers and temptations one must resort to Christ for counsell: for to this end is he a Counsellor. He told them they were miserable, and therefore gaue them counsell, declaring that he is at hand in all our miseries and distresse. And therefore we must resort to Christ for his counsell, and rest vpon it; and in order our selues according to it. The good king *Iehoshaphat* (when the Moabites and Ammonites banded together) was in great distresse, but what did he? *We* (said he) *know not,*

Lord, what to do, but our eyes are toward thee. That is, we looke to thee for counsell and direction: we must rest & rely vpon thee for wholesome counsell & good direction. So should all men do in distresse and daunger, as we are now, by reason of our sinnes and the professed malice of our enemies: for by all likelihood these dayes are the time of our chastisement and correction; therefore we must say as he said. Therefore in all distresse, whether it be sicknesse or pang of death, forsake all ill counsell, go not to wizards and Astrologians for helpe: but humble your selues, and pray for his counsell. So much for the first part, that is, the manner of prescribing this remedie.

Now of the remedie it selfe. As the miserie had three parts, and those great miseries all: so Christ propoundeth his remedie in such sort, that it is answerable to the three branches of the miserie: first, *gold, that thou mayest be rich*: secondly, *rayment*: thirdly, *eye salve*. By *gold*, (according to the analogie of the Scripture) we are to vnderstand the graces of Gods spirit, as *true faith, repentance, feare and love of God & man*. All these are called *gold*: as the triall of our faith is said to be more precious then gold. We may likewise vnderstand al other gifts of the spirit: yea, all Christs merits, & Christ himself the fountaine of all.

Purged by the fire. That is, precious and fine gold, of speciall account, that is purged from all drosse by the art of man. This sheweth, what is the propertie of his gifts and graces, they are as precious as fine pure gold: as 1. *Per.* 1. 5. This is worth the marking, that the gifts of Gods spirit are of great price and value, and that before Gold. *Psalm* 119. 72. *Math.* 13. 4. This teacheth all, how to beautifie themselves in soule and bodie. The blind and false opinion of the world is, that strange attire and forreine fashions beautifie and adorne the bodie: and it is commonly thought that Iewels and precious stones adorne vs: and indeed it is true in some persons, such as be great personages: but strange fashions and outlandish attire disgraceth the bodie. The right way to beautifie the bodie indeed, and to make it truly glorious, and to adorne the soule also, is to get these graces: for these are as precious as fine gold. Our bodies should be the temples of the holy Ghost, & the houses of a wor-
thie

this guest: therefore we should the rather labour for the best ornaments. And if you will adorne your selues as you ought, you must do it with the graces of Gods spirit, and abhorre these fond and absurd fashions, which no wise man can like of.

That thou maist be rich, &c. These graces haue a further effect, and serue not onely to adorne and beautifie, but also to make men rich. Here then see the common folly, nay, madnesse of men, which spend all their time, wit, and strength to enrich their bodies, and leaue their soules vnfurnished. What a madnesse is this, that so many should neglect true riches, and studie for nothing more then that which is nothing lesse then riches, euen counterfeited riches? By this text it is more then manifest, that such are more then mad, and that this folly is very great. Therefore seeing true riches be the graces of Gods spirit, seeke for these. So much for the first part of the remedie.

White garments. That is, Christ himselfe and his righteousness imputed. As Gal. 3. 27. euen as a garment is put on the bodie, so is Christ and his righteousness, and the fruite thereof, that is, sanctification: all this is meant by garments here. Now the end is to couer the nakednesse of the soule, which is deformed and defiled with sinne.

Eye saluo. That is, the spirit of illumination, knowledge wrought in the mind by the spirit of God. For as eye-saluo doth cleare the eye sight, and sharpen the same, where it was by some occasion hindered: so doth Christ by illumination make a man know and vnderstand God in Christ, and discern betweene good and euill, of things temporall and eternall. Thus you haue the meaning of these words.

Now by the exposition you may see, that by all these we can vnderstand nothing but Christ himselfe and his merits. One and the same thing is signified by three words, to shew, that there is in Christ the fulnesse of grace, and that he hath remedies for all our wants. The Laodiceans were poore in spirituall goods, and Christ was their riches; naked, and he their garment; blind, and he their eye-saluo. So that looke how many sinnes there be in men, so many contrarie remedies there be in Christ. What wants soeuer be in vs, he hath a supply of them all. The Papists

make him an insufficient Saviour, in that they patch our merits to his, and so they disgrace Christ: but we are to count Christ a most perfect and absolute Mediator and Redeemer in himself without vs.

To buy. The meanes how these worthie gifts of God are gotten. Christ saith, by *buying* and bargaining: he saith not, receive, but *buy*. This is an allusion to the state of that citie which was rich, and consisted most of Merchants, which liued by buying and trafficke: therefore he speaketh to them in their owne kind: as if he should say: You are a people exercised in buying and selling, and are delighted with nothing more: therefore come, I haue wares for you of sundrie sorts, gold, garments, and eyesalve, buy of me. Then the word *buy* must not be vnderstood properly: for so we can buy nothing of Christ, but all is given vs. This is said onely by way of resemblance; and I will shew wherein it standeth. The principal things in bargaining are these: first, a man that is to buy teeth his want, & desireth to haue it suppli-
ed: secondly, he cometh to the place where it may be had, calleth for it, looketh on it, and liketh it: thirdly, he maketh the price and value of it, he cheapeneth it: fourthly, he giueth money for it, or moneys worth, and so buyeth it: fifthly, if it be a great summe he giueth earnest in hand. So by a certaine proportion and resemblance, there is a kind of bargaining between vs and Christ. For a man must feele himselfe to stand in need of Christ and of his merits, and so see his owne want and miserie. For, because men see want of bread, meate, drinke, and cloth in their houses, therefore they go to buy of the baker, brewer, butcher, and draper, &c. Well then, looke how sensibly a man feeleth the want of these things, so evidently should we feele our want of Christ and his merits. And as the feeling of our want is the beginning and occasion of our going to buy, so it should be in this our merchandise. Againe, we should hunger and long after Christ. As a buyer taketh liking of, and longing for that he wanteth, and is thereby stirred vp to buy; so besides the sense of our want, we should hunger and thirst after Christ. Besides, we must prize Christ at so high a rate, that we count all things else as drosse and dounge; as *Paule* counted most excellent

cellent things no better: we must value him above ten thousand worlds. Lastly, we must make an exchange. How? seeing we can giue him nothing but his owne: therefore he saith, *Come buy without money.* Simon Magus would haue bought him for money; and was deceiued. Yet there must be an exchange, we must giue him all our sinnes, and receiue his righteousness. See here a most blessed exchange: for our shame and confusion, we haue Christs righteousness and his merits. How? Thus: when we begin to humble our selues, and pray for remission and reconciliation, then this change is made.

Though we can giue him no earnest, yet he giueth vs earnest. What is that? It is some portion of Gods spirit, some small measure of his grace: that is our earnest, that we shall haue the kingdom of heauen. And thus heauen is bought and sold betweene Christ and vs.

When the heart mourneth for sin, and praieth for pardon, and purposeth to sin no more, this is the worke of Gods spirit in vs, and the earnest of our eternall saluation in heauen. Be our graces neuer so few or small, it is a sufficient earnest, as a penie is for a bargaine of a hundred pound.

Seeing all these things concurre to the receiuing of Christ, therefore he calleth it *bargaining*. So this point is plaine, how this spirituall bargaine is made, and why it pleaseth Christ to terme it so.

Now we see that we are commaunded this dutie: but how stands the case with vs? Surely though many come to Church, few make that bargaine which is mentioned: we are like passengers by sea, which see many goodly buildings, fruitfull lands, soiles, and sumptuous cities, but they make no purchase of them: so we come and heare the word, but where is the partie that makes this bargaine with Christ?

Come to particulars. I appeale to all your consciences: who almost seeleth or seeth his owne want and miserie? Men can soone see the want of necessities in their houses, but this they cannot see. And as for the desire of Christ, and longing for him, there is none. When you are drie or hungrie, you can say you are drie and hungrie: but who saith, I thirst for Christ? If we looke to

our estimation of Christ, we are plaine Gadarens, and of *Esau's* mind, we set more by a messe of red pottage, and esteeme the basest things about Christ and his merits: nay, we are loth to part with our sins, and to take his righteousness; we will rather keep them still then change for the better. Who taketh Christs righteousness, and declareth it by fruites? We can be content to loade Christ with our sins, but we wil not be loden with his righteousness. Is this a good change? No, it is not. Every man can say; he must rise betimes which shall go beyond him in base and earthly bargaines: but who hath regard of this excellent and heavenly bargaine? Then to conclude, I pray you al make this bargaine with Christ, and do it presently, let it be your first worke. You are carefull to put your children to good trades, and you do wel; but be as carefull that they may make this bargaine, and you shall do much better. This is the cheapest and the best bargaine that ever was made, it will make you and yours rich for ever: as for other bargaines, many cannot get them, and many loose them when they haue gotten them; this onely is durable.

Verse 19. As many as I loue, &c. We haue heard a sharp reproofe, and as sharp a threatning; by which, because they might take occasion to doubt and despaire of Gods mercie and fauour in Christ Iesus, therefore now he takes away all occasion in the 19. and 20. verses. First thus, If I vse to rebuke and chasten all that I loue, then you need not doubt of my mercie, albeit I rebuke and threaten you so. This, I take it, is the proper occasion of these words.

Now see the meaning: *I loue*. Christ loueth the creatures two wayes: first, as a Creator: secondly, as a redeemer. As he is a Creator, he loueth them with a generall and common loue, whether the creatures be reasonable or vnreasonable. As Redeemer, he loueth them with a speciall and peculiar loue, not comon to all, but to that part of mankind onely which is elected and chosen to saluation. And of this last loue he speaketh here: as if he should say, *As many as I loue*, communicating with them my righteousness and life eternall: *I rebuke*. The word hath a larger extent and signification, first to conuince one of a fault, and then to checke or reprove the person: and it cannot well be rendred

In one English word, *And chastise*: that is, with such a kind of correction which a father useth to his child, which is called *nurture*, to breake a child of his fault, and to teach him obedience: and so it is vsed *Prouer. 3. 12.* whence this text is borrowed. The meaning then briefly is this: All those persons whom I loue, I conuince of their particular faults, and rebuke them: and like a louing father, I chastise them and nurture them, to breake them of their vices, and bring them to amendment.

Now for the vse of these words: Christ sets downe his ordinarie dealing with his seruants, which is, by reproofe and chastisement, and diuers visitations: for this very end, that he might conuince them and correct them. Euery member of Christ must come vnder his rod, therefore looke for it: yea marke further, Christ layeth vpon all his seruants afflictions in diuers sorts, according to the diuers dispositions of mens natures: such as will hardly be broken of their faults, he laith vpon them more sharp punishments: where men are easier to be amended, there he useth milder correction.

The vse of this is two-fold: *Prouerb. 3. 12.* the first is, despise not the Lords chastisement, for it is a token of his loue: whē soeuer he reproofeth or afflicteth thee by visitations and crosses, make not light account, but make profit of it. The second is, *saint nor arme thy self with patience*, because it is the Lords maner to chastise those that he loueth: and so many chastisements, so many pledges and pawnes of his loue towards his seruants. By this Christ is an example to all parents and gouernours: they must giue tokens of loue in necessarie corrections, that their children and seruants may be brought from their misdeemeanour: for this end chastisement should be vsed.

It were to be wished, that all parents and maisters did vse to giue correction thus: but our case is lamentable in this respect. Men thinke it enough to prouide foode and raiment for their household: all their care is for the bodie only, and they neuer seeke to reforme their misdeemeanours in life. This negligence brings many sinnes with it, and pulleth many iudgements vpon vs. So much for the second point.

Amend. Againe marke the order of the words: *Rebuke and*

chasten. Here we haue a necessary instruction, seeing Christ first propounds a direct end of his chastisement, that is, their amendment: which that he may the better effect, first he conuinceth them, secondly he reprehendeth, and thirdly chasteneth them; and all these tend to our amendment. A worthie and excellent order, and to be followed of all gouernors; they must propound a good end of all chastisements: first the good of the partie chastised: then they must vse this order, first a conuiction of the conscience by the word of God: secondly, reprehension: thirdly, correction, if the two former wil not serue. Which being so, you see how they ouershoote themselues, that make correction serue for nothing but a meanes of reuenge, an action of choller and rage, without any purpose to better the partie. Whereas this order vfed, would reforme the person, and stop many vices, and nip them euen in the head: to some it is as good as meate and drinke to be fighting and brawling.

Be zealous. Here is a remedie for luke-warmnesse. In the eight verse they had a remedie for pride: now he maketh a plaister for luke-warmnesse. Here first marke how these words depend on the former: Christ had said, *Whom I loue, I vse to chastise*, according as their faults be greater or lesser: therefore seeing I haue corrected thee, repent. Where we are taught the vse of all reproofes, admonitions and visitations; the speciall end of them, is to driue vs to amend. As oft as the Lord doth either by word reprove, or by deed correct vs, it is to shew that we must repent and amend: therefore whensoever you are visited, say the Lord summons you to repent: take an occasion by the visitation, of further reformation; yea, know it, that so many afflictions are so many sermons of Repentance, to make you grow and increase in faith, repentance and obedience.

Now that we may the better vnderstand what this commandment *Be zealous* meaneth, diuers points are to be handled: first, what zeale is. Zeale is an affection, that is compounded of two affections, loue and indignation, or sorow: therefore first we must loue Christ aboue all things, if we will be zealous: secondly, we must be grieved and angred when Christ is dishonoured, Loue of religion, and griefe for the want of good successe therof, will

will make men zealous. We haue an example in Christ, *Ioh. 2. 17.* where thus much is signified: that his loue to his father was so great, that the heate of his indignation had almost consumed him: he preferred the accomplishment of his Fathers, will before all.

In the second place, note the diuerse kinds of zeale: good, that is, true: or bad, that is, counterfeit. To a good zeale there is required, first, true faith: secondly, repentance: thirdly, knowledge. As for faith, it is the very root of good zeale: for as *Paul* saith, Loue is from faith vnfaigned, *1. Tim. 1. 5.* Now zeale is an affection compounded of loue and faith. And as for repentance, we see that zeale and it are conioyned in this place. *Iohn* indeed was zealous, but because he repented not, but liued in the sins of his predecessors, it was no good zeale. And for the last, we must know, that zeale without knowledge is but rashnesse. And thus you see how to distinguish true zeale from counterfeit, euen by the companions of it. Now further by the fruites it may be discerned.

First, it compelleth a man to please God in all things: it will enforce one, ouer-rule and maister him. *2. Cor. 5. 14.* Whether we be out of our wit, we are in it vnto God, &c. The very loue of Christ and his Gospell inforced him, that he could not but preach. So wheresoeuer this true zeale is in any measure, it will make a man that he cannot but do his dutie. It will burst forth and find an issue, like a flame: as *Elihu* said, he could not containe, his belly would burst. Secondly, It will make a man indur to obey God with all his heart, strength & power. Example, Good king *Iosia* turned with all his heart, *Dauid* prayed with groines vnspcakable: according to the multitude of thy mercies, &c. and so goeth on maruellous earnestly and feruently: he prayed not slackly and coldly, but with all his force and power, from the heart, for pardon and reconciliation. And so when he gaue thanks, he saith, *My soule praise the Lord, and all that is within me, &c. Psal. 103. 1.*

Thus you see what be the fruites of zeale, and what it is to be zealous. In a word then it is this, to haue our hearts enflamed with a loue of Christ and his word about all things, and to be

exceeding angrie when it is disobeyed, enforcing vs to do our dutie with all the strength we haue. Now to end this point, we heard before, that lukewarmenesse in religion is our sinne generally throughout the land, our zeale is cold, and our profession but formall. How shall we reforme this? Become zealous, beare a seruient loue to religion, loue Christ aboue all, and be grieved when you see him dishonored, or his word disobeyed, and false worship established. Away with this slacknesse in religion, otherwise it had bene better you had bene of no religion, then to be neither hote nor cold. A man were better be a Turke or a Jew, then a lukewarme Christian: for they are better then such, and such professors are worse then they.

And amend. This is added, because zeale without repentance is but counterfeit zeale, as *Iehues* was. But of what vices must they repent? Euen of lukewarmenesse. They were not bidden repent because of any grosse finnes that they had committed, but for slacknesse in performing good duties. Here is a good lesson for our common people, which say, because they are no grosse sinners, as adulterers, theeuers, murtherers, but meane well, hurt no man, and liue peaceably, their case is good. They despise preaching, and neuer thinke how the want of practising good duties, is a thing that they should repent for. But they are to know, that they are summoned to repent for want of good duties, though they do no euill. This is the diuels enchantment, he rocketh them asleepe with it. You may haue all these things, and yet be condemned and go to hell. And yet this is a common opinion, and spread ouer euery where: but know it, thou maist liue and die with thy good meaning and peaceable liuing, and yet be damned, if thou repent not.

Verf. 20. Behold, I stand at the doore, &c. Lest any should despaire, because he had reprobued them so sharply, and menaced them so seuerely, he addeth these words, which are to confirme the Church against doubting, by shewing signes of his loue. Now before he setteth downe the speciall tokens of his loue, he saith, *Behold.* In which very note of attention, we haue a necessarie instruction, to teach vs; that if we would arme our selues against doubting, we must acquaint our selues with the tokens

tokens of Gods loue; lay them to our hearts, and remember them. We haue of this an example in *David, Psal. 138* in all the verses saue the last, he heareth Gods goodnesse and his particular blessings: whereupon he inferreth this conclusion; Therefore without all doubt I shall live long to praise God. And all this came from the particular obseruation of Gods goodnesse; therefore if you would not stand in doubt of Gods mercie, obserue his dealing and his loue in Christ, as plentiful tokens of his providence. They being laid together, worke in vs peace of conscience, and ioy in the holy Ghost. There is no man so full of despaire and doubting, but if he lay these things together, and obserue diligently all the tokens of Gods fauour, he shall find store of comfort: therefore looke backe to your liues; what tokens of Gods loue you haue received, and in the time of trouble that will be a remedie against desperation.

I stand. Christ expresseth his mind by borrowed speeches: for in this verse he compareth euery man to a house or household, and our hearts to doores by which an entrance is made: and himselfe to a guest or stranger which cometh to the house, and desireth to be let in and entertained: yet not so much to looke for kindnesse to be shewed him, as to shew fauour to vs. By this similitude Christ purposeth to shew this Church, what his mind is toward it; and he expresseth it by two signes here set downe: first, a desire of their conuersion, which he heartily seeketh and looketh for, *I stand and knocke*. Secondly, his promise after their conuersion, *If any, &c.* he will haue fellowship, euen mutual fellowship with them.

Now of the words in order as they lie. The scope and substance of them being thus generally propounded; I here note two things. First, that this Church (if we regard the greatest part of it) had not true fellowship with Christ as yet, nor Christ with the: because he was not yet receiued into their houses, but stood at their doores which were shut; it his may seeme strange: but the cause is euident; the truth is, there were many good things in them: for they knew the Gospell and liked it, and professed it, and were partakers of the scales of the covenant: and yet they were tainted with one great sinne of

lukewarmnesse, which closed vp the doore of their hearts, so that though they had many good things, yet this one sinne kept out Christ. By which we see, that one sinne, in a man indued with many good graces, keepeth out Christ, and barreth him from all fellowship and societie with him. *Iudas* had many notable things in him; he forsooke all, and preached Christ, and yet couetousnesse kept out Christ. *Herod* had so too, but in euill kept the doore shut against Christ. It is the nature of sinne to cut a man off from all fellowship with Christ: and so we may haue many excellent things among vs, as the word and Sacraments; and yet if thou be a man which hast but one sinne (and nourisheth it) it is a barre to keepe out Christ from entring. If thou be giuen either to couetousnesse, drunkennes, fornication, adulterie, theft, blasphemie, or lying, &c. that one sin whatsoeuer, will keepe out Christ, so that he must be faine to stand and stay at the doore, and so must abide as long as a man continueth in any one sinne. Therefore so many as haue any desire to haue fellowship with Christ, must haue care to cut off all sinne: for though thou haue knowledge, wit, memorie, vnderstanding and vterance, yet if thou haue but one sinne, it taketh away the very ground of all fellowship with Christ: that is, of all felicitie and happinesse.

In the originall, it is not *I stand*, but *I haue stood*. So *Ier. 7. 13.* *I haue risen vpe early:* and *Esa. 65. 2.* *I haue stretched out my arme all the day long.* And here, *I haue risen vp early*, and stood here long, all the day till night: for so much the word of *supping* importeth; as if he should say, till supper time.

This sheweth Christs exceeding patience, in waiting for the conuersion of this people. He might in iustice haue condemned them for their sinnes, and haue cast them to hell, and yet he standeth still all the day waiting for their conuersion, till he is faine to complaine.

Now this place serueth to shew and set forth, and giueth iust occasion to speake of Gods patience, in waiting for the conuersion & amendement of a sinner. Now that which Christ saith to them, may he iustly say to vs: he hath risen vp early, and spent a long day in waiting at our doores, aboue sixe and thirtie yeares:

yeares; therefore he may well vpbraide vs. Let vs then learne to know the day of our visitation: for that is the day of a peoples visitation, when the Gospel is preached and Christ standeth knocking: therefore it stands vs vpon to labour to know this, and regard it. If we can resolue our selues of this, then we practise the dutie which Christ prescribeth the church of Ierusalem: if we do not so, but shall let passe all the signes and tokens of Gods mercy, we must looke for the like end as Ierusalem had. So much for the first part, *I stand at the doore.*

And knocke. First he vsed meanes to enter when they had barred him out. Marke the vnspeakeable mercie of Christ: they by their sinnes stopt Christ from entring, yet he pursueth them with mercie, and offereth mercie to them that refused it, and contented themselves to lie and liue in their sinnes. When Adam had sinned and fled from God, the Lord sought him out, and made a covenant of grace with him. So *Esay 65.* the Lord saith, *he was found of them that neuer sought him*: they that neuer dreamed of mercie found mercie. In the parable of the lost sheep, that sheep which was left as a prey to the wild beasts, Christ sought it vp, and brought it home. All these places tend to one end, to shew the infinite mercie of Christ. This is true in all churches, yea in this of ours. If we haue mercie, we haue it before we seeke it, nay when we refuse it, as much as in vs lieth. This should be an occasion to stirre vp our hearts to magnifie Christ for his mercie: we should not let passe such considerations as these, but rather breake out into praise of Gods loue and mercie, which is a bottomlesse sea.

Quest. It may be demaunded, how he knockes. *Answ.* The words precedent shew the sense: for these words haue relation to them. He said before, he would spue them out: then he giueth them counsell. Now by so sharpe a rebuke they might haue despaired: therefore he shewes, that by this threatening, and rebuke, and counsell, he knockes, that they might perceiue they were not tokens of wrath but of mercie. So then this knocking is nothing else but the reproofe, threatening, and counsell vsed before. He knocketh when it pleaseth him to make men see their siane by such things.

Here then we are to marke the state of al people which haue the ministration of the word, they haue Christ among them, and he standeth at the doore and knocketh at euery mans heart. All threatnings of the law, reproofes of sin, exhortations, admonitions and promises, they are so many knockes of Christ. A great & unspeakable mercie, that the King of heauen and earth should do this. Now then doth Christ knocke thus by preaching, promises, and threatnings, &c. then we must not be so dull, dead, and backward, but shew more zeale. If any man of great place and calling knocke at your doores, what stirring is there, that you may receiue him as is meete? Then what a shame is this, when Christ vouchsafeth to deale thus mercifully with vs? Againe, in that Christ cometh by the ministry of the Gospell to work our conuersion, it serueth to admonish vs to turne with all speed, for we know not how long he will stand and reach forth the hand of his ministration to beate vpon our hearts. Marke further, this knocking is not a light and soft kind of knockings, but it goeth with crying; he both knocketh and crieth, it is an earnest knocking of one that would faine enter.

Seeing then Christ standing at the doore of mens hearts knocketh so earnestly to saue mens soules, we againe ought to be earnest to receiue and embrace the Gospell. He knocketh in good earnest, and we must accordingly by Gods grace be as earnest. So much for the first token of Christs loue, his desire of their conuersion, which he sheweth by two signes; first his waiting, secondly his knocking, and that ioyned with crying.

If any man, &c. Now followeth the second token, namely, a promise of fellowship with them after their conuersion. These words haue bene much abused, therefore I wil stand a litle to set downe the meaning. Marke the forme of speech, it is such as seemeth to giue a man an action in his owne conuersion, whereby he comes and receiues Christ. So it attributes to mans will an action, as if he should say, I for my part stand and knocke, if therefore any man heare, &c.

This may seeme strange, that such an action should be attributed to a man that is dead in sin. But this speech is vsed for iust cause; for in the conuersion of a sinner there be three agents: first, the holy

holy Ghost: secondly, the word; thirdly, mans will. The principal agent and worker is the holy Ghost, which changeth the mind and will from euill to good, the will by nature willing nothing but that which is against the will of God. Secondly, the word, which is an instrument of the holy Ghost, for he works not now ordinarily by reuelation, or speciall instinct and inspiration, but when a man is reading or hearing the word, and applying it to his heart, then the holy Ghost workes in and by the word, that being the power of God to saluation, frō faith to faith. Thirdly, the wil though it be dead by nature, & can do nothing of it self; yet when the holy Ghost begins to moue it, it moues it self, and strues to be altered whē God moues it. We must not think mā's wil is like a peece of wax, which hath no actiō, but only passiuely receiues and impressiō: but the will being disposed, moues and stirres it selfe. Euen as fire, so soone as it is kindled it burnes, and as soone as it burnes is fire: so when God hath once giuen grace, the will moueth, the mind seeth and acknowledgeth sin, and the will inclined by the holy Ghost begins a strife against sin, and makes a man endeouour to please God so much as he can. So the will in the very first conuersion hath his action, though not by nature but by grace. Now considering these three actions concur in the conuersion of a sinner, hence it is that actions are ascribed to sinners which are to be conuerted, as here and in manie other places, not that they can do anything of themselves without Christ, but when they are wrought vpon by the holy Ghost. Thus a man hath a free will in his first conuersiō by grace: as fire hath some effects of fire. so soone as ever it is kindled: therefore it is said; *Repent and beleue*, to impenitent persons; not because they can do it of themselves, but because when it shall please the holy Ghost to worke it in their hearts by the word, they can turne, and vse good meanes. This is the cause why the holy Ghost ascribes an action to such persons: when God giues grace to receiue Christ; then it receiueh Christ: when God opens the heart by that grace, it is enabled to receiue Christ.

This being the true meaning of these words, let vs see how this text hath bene abused, first by Papists, which gather hereupō that a man hath free will in his conuersion by nature: that he hath

and that is the faith which sets open the heart wide to receiue Christ. Thus if you shall humble your selues, and acknowledge your vnworthinesse, and lay hold on Christ with true faith, and testifie it by seruent loue to Christ and his members, then shall your hearts be open indeed, and you shall receiue Christ. Thus much for the true meaning of the condition.

It followeth, *I wil sup, &c.* This is the promise it self, namely a mutual fellowship with Christ: this is the ground of al ioy, comfort & happines: therefore it is here propounded as the principal thing, and it hath two parts: first, *I will sup with him*: secondly, *and he with me*. The true communion betweene Christ and his members, stands in these two things. Here is a double feast, and these two containe the summe and substance of *Salomons* book called the Canticles: for there Christ entertaineth & scaeth the church, and the church feasteth him. For the first, *I will sup with him*. How? *Cant. 4. end, Come my welbeloued and eate of the delicate things and pleasant fruites*: there you may see how euery Christian soule conuerted, makes Christ a feast, to wit, with the fruites of true repentance. *Psal. 51. The broken and contrite heart*, that is a most worthie part of the feast, and a sacrifice acceptable to God. Secondly, *a beleeuing heart*, for without faith it is vnpossible to please God, *Heb. 11.* and when we giue vp our bodies and soules a liuing sacrifice. *Rom 12. 1.* bring broken, beleeuing, and obedient hearts: these are the dishes and delicate s wherewith Christ is fed, wherein he delights. *And he with me*. We must also be feasted by Christ: for Christ comes not for this end to be entertained, but to entertaine. The feast which Christ makes, is his own bodie and blood in the administration of his Supper: his bodie is true meate, and his blood is true drinke. And the vessels in which it is serued out, are the scales of the word; and the guests are penitent sinners, which haue broken hearts, which hunger and thirst after Christ. Now from this feast ariseth righteousness, peace of conscience, and ioy in the holy Ghost. *Rom. 14. 17.* All ioy that heart can thinke comes by this feast. Now seeing Christ makes these promises as a principall token of his loue, we must make some vse of them. We must renounce all our carnal vanities and earthly delights, and giue our selues no more

to sursetting and drunkenesse, and sumptuous banquetting. Here is a better kind of feasting, therefore turne your eyes from those, lift vp your hearts, and haue care to entertaine Christ: feast him with the graces that God hath giuen you, and labor againe to be feasted of him, feed of his bodie and blood to life eternall. Labour to be acquainted with these, that you may know by experience how Christ feasts you, and you him. You know one friend how to entertaine another, euerie man according to his dignitie: but you should haue more care of this spirituall and mutuall entertainment betweene Christ and you.

Againe, see here a notable abuse of those that come to the Lords table: for marke how these two go together, Christ feasts vs, and we must feast him, so that there may be an enterchange of feasting: but our communicants come to the Lords table, and they will haue Christ feast them, but they will not feast him, whereas we should feast him daily by faith, obedience, and repentance, and good duties of our callings: but we like churlish & vngratefull *Nabab*, haue not one good dish to feast him withall. This is our shame. Or if we be good guests for a day, yet after that is past, we haue no care to entertaine Christ. Looke to it therefore, and see that you feed Christ, not by your owne natural power, but by your gifts of grace.

To him that ouercometh, &c. This is the conclusion of the Epistle, in which note two parts: first, a promise: secondly, a precept. The promise: *To him that ouercometh*, that is, he that holds out, keeping faith and a good conscience against all the enemies of his saluation. *Shall sit*: that is haue fellowship with Christ in his glorie. Christ doth not promise equall glorie and honor, for that is not possible for anie creature, because he is the head of his church, but onely a participation: as if he should say, he shall be partaker of my glorie, so farre as shall be meete and conuenient for him: as appeareth by the words following. But this (wil some say) is no great matter. True, the carnall heart of man may surmise so: therefore he addes, as *I ouercame, &c.* This is no small glorie, for like as my father did aduance me when I had ouercome, so will I aduance all my members, when they haue overcome their spirituall enemies. Now as Christ is inferiour to the

Father, as he is Mediator, and yet sits with him: so the members of Christ may sit with him, and yet be vnequall to him in glorie.

Verse 22. Let him that hath an eare. This hath bene expounded often before.

The memoriall of the righteous is euerlasting: but the name of the wicked shall rot. Prou. 10.

Laus Christo nescia finis.

An



An excellent Sermon, plainly
proving that Rome is Babylon: and
 that Babylon is fallen.

Preached long since by a famous Divine, and added as a
 Commentarie to the hardest part of the Revelation.

REVEL. 14. VERS. 8.

*She is fallen, she is fallen, even Babylon that great Citie: for of the
 wine of the furie of her fornications she hath made all Nations to
 drinke.*



HE holy Euangelist S. Luke in the fourth chapter of his Gospell recordeth, that on a time, when our Sauour came into the Synagogue at Nazareth, to reade as his custome was, there was deliuered to him a booke containing the Prophecie of the Prophet *Esay*. Which after he had opened, at the first he found the place where it was written in these words: *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me, that I should preach the Gospell to the poore: He hath sent me that I should heale the broken in heart, that I should preach deliuerance to the captiues, and sight to the blind, that I should set at libertie them that are bruised, and to preach the acceptable yeare of the Lord.* Then after he had closed the booke, and deliuered it to the Minister, he sate downe to preach, and the eyes of all them that were in the congregation were bent vpon him. Then he opened his mouth, and spake vnto them these words: *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your eares, and they all gaue him testimony that it was so.* In like maner may I say, concerning this place of Scripture which I haue read vnto you: In your eyes and eares is this Scripture this day fulfilled. And I pray God you may all likewise beare witnesse with me, that it is so.

The last time that I speake in this auditorie, I intreated of the flourishing and prosperous estate of Ierusalem, which is the Church of God, set forth in the 122. Psalm, and therefore good order now requireth, that I should speake of the decay and ouerthrow of the enemie of Ierusalem, which is Babylon, the See and Church of Antichrist; and for that purpose principally, haue I chosen this text of Scripture to speake of: that by the one we might be enflamed with loue of the true Church of Christ, and by the other be moued to the hatred of that false Church of Antichrist. Now this text of Scripture (*She is fallen, she is fallen; euen Babylon that great citie, for of the wine of the fury of her fornication she hath giuen all nations to drinke*) offereth me three speciall things to be considered: first, what Babylon is: secondly, what is become of her: and thirdly, what is the cause of her heauie decay.

In the first part, by the assistance of God, I shall plainly shew and proue, that Babylon is Rome: In the second, that Babylon or Rome, by the iust iudgement of God is fallen, yea, she is fallen: In the last, the reason of this so sharpe sentence of God against her, because she hath deceined all the world with drunkenesse and whoredome. Within the compasse of these three propositions I will keep my selfe in all my discourse: sauing that by your fauour, forasmuch as this is the middle voice of three Angels that speake in this Chapter, for a Preface, I will vse the voice of the first Angel, of whose preaching this my text is a consequent: and in the stead of a conclusion I will touch the voyce of the third Angel, which is a consequent of this the middle Angels voice. Concerning the preface, it shall be this in few words. After that S. Iohn had described the perseruacion and vnitie of the Church of God in Christ their head, euen in the midst of the furie of Antichrist, vnder the figure of the Lambe standing on mount Sion with 144000. of his chaste worshippers: next he declareth that God would bring the same againe into the sight of the world by preaching of the Gospell, and the ouerthrow of the kingdome of Antichrist. Wherefore he sendeth an Angell flying in the midst of heauen, or betweene heauen and earth, bringing with him an euerlasting Gospell, and preaching that
all

all men should feare God, and giue glorie to his name, for the time of his iudgement was at hand; and that they should worship him that made heauen and earth, and all things that are in them. A very Angelicall sermon indeed, & an euertlasting Gospell is that, (howsoeuer the enemies charge it with noueltie) that teacheth to feare God, to giue glorie to his name, and to worship him onely that is the Creator of heauen and earth. And a consequent of that Gospell is this Sermon of the Angell. *She is fallen, she is fallen, euen Babylon that great Citie.* For wheresoeuer men are taught to feare God aright, to giue all glorie to him alone, and to worship none other but him that made heauen and earth, and all things in them contained: there must needs follow a great fall and ouerthrow of Babylon, and Babylonieall religion, which teacheth the contrarie. Wherefore if we loue the peace of Ierusalem, to the ouerthrow of this her great aduersarie, let vs imbrace this euertlasting Gospell, that we feare God, glorifie God, and worship God alone. Again, if we hate Babylon with a perfect hatred, as we ought to do, and therefore would seeke her viter ruine and decay: let vs procure that this Gospell may be preached, that men may learn to feare, honour, and serue God onely, and then vndoubtedly Babylon shall fall, she shall fall I say, she can stand no longer. Let this suffice therefore for a Preface.

Now haue we to consider, what Babylon is. I haue vndertaken to proue, that Babylon here spoken of, is Rome. But first I must admonish you, how I vnderstand Rome. And that is not onely for a certaine place in Italy, compassed about with walles, and furnished with buildings, as other cities are: but for that authoritie, gouernment and preheminenec which is challenged by means of that citie, or for the Romaine Empire, which is claimed by prerogative of the same citie: and so is Babylon taken in the Scripture, and namely in this Prophecie. For in the eleuenth Chapter of this Reuelation, the same great citie is called also Sodoma and Aegyptus, where our Lord was crucified: Sodoma, for the great abomination and filthinesse therein maintained, and Aegyptus, because it keepeth the people of God in miserable bondage and slauerie, as Aegypt vnder Pharaos did of

old. Whereby it is manifest, that the great citie is to be taken for that tyrannic, government, and prebeminence, as I said, which is challenged in the right of that great Citie: and so is the regiment and gouernance of the Romaine Antichrist, depending vpon the prerogatiue of his See, which is Rome. Now if any will contend, that Babylon must be taken in the proper sense, for a citie in Chaldea onely, as though we should looke for the See of Antichrist out of the East (as the Papists for thirty or fortie yeares ago deuised a fable, that was renewed also in Queene *Maries* dayes, of a monstros child which should be borne at Babylon, which they would haue men suppose to be Antichrist:) he may be flatly conuicted of great ignorance, whē the Angell in the seuenteenth Chapter of this Prophecie testifieth, that her name is Babylon in a mysterie, as in the eleuenth Chapter, that she is spirituallly called Sodoma and Aegyptus, not in respect of situation of the place, but in similitude and likenesse of conditions;

Wherefore it remaineth, that (according to my promise) I proue Babylon here mentioned, to be Rome. The greatest controuersie that this day troubleth the world, is, where the true Church of God should be: the Papists making great bragges, that it is on their side, & we affirming that it is on our side. This controuersie will soone be cut off, and brought to an end, if it may be shewed that Babylon is Rome: for then cannot Rome be the Church of Christ, but the Church of Antichrist. And therefore it standeth me vpon, to bring very good and substantiall proofes, to maintaine this my assertion, that Babylon is Rome. But what proofes may be counted sufficient? Is not the authoritie of holy Scriptures, and the testimonie of auncient Doctors of the Church good and substantiall proofes? Therefore if authoritie of Scriptures be a good and substantiall prooffe, ye shall haue Scriptures: if consent of auncient Writers in the same sentence be of any value, you shall haue plentie.

And first beginning with Scriptures, I will not alledge such places as be hard and darke to vnderstand, but such as be plaine, euident, and manifest, and can receiue no other interpretation, to satisfie the iudgement of any reasonable man; I omit therefore

fore so many figures as in this Reuelation do not very obscurely signifie, but euen directly point at and paint out that Antichristian Church. For although they do so aptly and fitly agree thereto, as a man might easily iudge they were made euen for the same purpose: yet because they might be wrested to some other meaning, if manifest places did not withstand, I will leave all aduantage that I might take of them, and hold me onely at this time to those plaine and euident demonstrations, which with no equitie nor conscience can admit any other interpretation. Onely I will here note, that forasmuch as all figures, types, and colours contained in this booke may so conueniently be applied to Rome, as though they had bene properly appointed to describe her, (as they were indeed) it is great prejudice against Rome, although no plainer proofes might be brought. But when so plaine arguments are brought forth, that without too much impudencie cannot be auoided, and all other figures and darke speeches agree accordingly, it is a manifest coniunction that Rome is none other but this Babylon.

But to begin with these plaine places (as I haue promised,) the first shall be out of the eleventh Chapter of this Reuelation, the place before alleaged: where it is declared, that God in all times, yea in the greatest persecution, would maintaine his Church, and reserue at the least two witnesses which should testifie of his truth, in spite of Antichrist and his adherents. Which although the monstrous beast that ariseth out of the bottomelesse pit, should murder and slay, yet God should restore them to life again, continually stirring vp a sufficient number to beare witnesse of his name and doctrine. In that Chapter I say is contained, that when the beast had murdered them, he should enuie them the honour of buriall, and so their bodies should lye in the streete or market place of that great citie, which is spiritually called Sodoma and Aegyptus, where our Lord was crucified. Declaring thereby, that as Rome had slaine and crucified the head, so should Rome persecute the members. And in the same Citie where their Lord was murdered, the seruants should be persecuted.

But here a man would thinke that I were impudent to as-

firm, that our Sauour Christ was crucified at Rome, whome all the world knoweth to haue suffered death at Ierusalem. But you must call to remembrance, that at the first I gaue warning, that I did not vnderstand Rome for the topographie of Rome, that is, so much ground onely as is compassed within the wallles of that Citie, but for the regiment, gouernance and prerogatiue that is claymed, by reason of that Citie or Monarchie, whereof Rome is the head: and then I shall easily proue that Christ was crucified at Rome.

For by whome was he condemned? was it not by *Pilate* the Deputie or Lieutenant of the Romain Empire? For what cause or crime was he adiudged to die? was it not for treason pretended to be committed against the Romaine Empire? With what kind of execution was he put to death? was it not such as was vsuall by the lawes of the Romaines, for such hainous offences as were vniustly laid to his charge? Finally, was not the place wherein he suffered, within the circuit of the Romaine Empire? May I not then iustly affirme that he was crucified at Rome, when by the Romaine Iudge he was condemned for a crime against the Romaine state, and executed by a kind of death appointed by the Romaine lawes, and in a place of the Romaine dominion? As for the Iewes, they had at that time no authoritie to put any man to death, as they confesse themselues, when *Pilate* bad them take him, and iudge him according to their owne lawe, meaning they shold decree some light punishment against him. They answered: It is not lawfull for vs to iudge him to dye. As touching the cause, although they accused him of blasphemie, in that he made himselfe the Sonne of God: yet could he not be condemned for that, because *Pilate* would admit no accusation, but such as contained a crime against the Romaine lawes. And as for the death of the crosse, it is manifest to be proper to the Romaines: for the Iewes would haue stoned him, if they might haue condemned him for blasphemie, according to the law of *Moses*. And that the Angell in that place by no means can vnderstand Ierusalem, it is manifest by these reasons: first, that he calleth it that great citie; which tearme could neuer be spoken of Ierusalem. Also he calleth it Sodoma and Aegyptus, which

which was the sea of the monstrous beast Antichrist, which in other places is often called Babylon. Whereas no man euer did imagine that Ierusalem should be called Sodome, Aegypt, or Babylon. Adde hercunto, that Ierusalem, the place where Christ suffered, was vtterly destroyed in S. *Iohns* time, whereby it is euident, that by this great citie, spiritually called Babylon, Sodoma, and Aegyptus, is meant none other but the Romaine Empire, which crucified the head, and should also bring foorth to put any man to death: and he hath deserued the monstrous beast Antichrist, which should torment and afflict the members, which began with murder of the Lord, and should continue, till it were destroyed, in murdering of the seruants. And by this plaine text, which cannot be wrested to any other sence, this great citie of Babylon, where Christ was crucified, is proued to be Rome, and the authoritie, rule, and power of the Romaine Citie.

The second plaine and euident prooffe which I will vse at this time, shall be taken out of the thirteenth Chapter of this Reuelation, where that euill shapen beast is described, which is the head of the persecuting malignant Church, hauing seuen heads and ten hornes: and is the same which afterward in the seuenteenth Chapter beareth the great whore Babylon, the mother of all abominations of the earth. Who so therefore will compare these things that are written in this booke, concerning the description of that monstrous beast, with those things that the Prophet *Daniel* in the seuenth Chapter of his Prophecie, describeth of the foure beasts, and specially of the fourth, which all men confesse to be the Romaine Empire: except he be too much blinded with frowardnes and peruerse affection, he must needes acknowledge, that this Beast which *Iohn* painteth out, is the same that *Daniel* setteth out: which containing in it the crueltie of the Leopard, the Beare and the Lion, which were the former Monarchies, is vnlike to them all, and therefore is the fourth Empire, which all the world acknowledgeth to be the Monarchie of Rome. What should I speake of the number of the hornes, equall in both, and generally of all other parts of their description, which is set foorth so like, and almost with

the same words, both of the one and of the other, that it were meere madnesse to imagine that this beast which *Iohn* describeth, should be any other, then that *Daniel* had so long before portraited. Then if the Beast in *Daniels* description doth signifie the fourth kingdome, as the Angell expoundeth it, which no man will denie to be the Romaine Monarchie: the same monstrous Beast, being here painted out in this Reuelation, with the same shape, colours and conditions, must needes signifie the Romaine Empire, and so Babylon by this reason also is proved to be Rome.

The third argument or prooffe is taken out of the seuenteenth Chapter of this Reuelation, and the ninth verse: where the Angell expounding to Saint *Iohn* the mysterie of the Beast with the seuen heades, declareth in very plaine wordes, that the seuen heades do signifie seuen hilles, whereon the woman sitteth. Now seeing it is euident, that the woman signifieth a great Citie, we must see where we can find a great Citie builded vpon seuen hilles, and that by the interpretation of the Angell is Babylon, the See of Antichrist. And if we seeke throughout the whole world, where shall we find a great Citie builded vpon seuen hills, but that great citie in Italie? which all Writers, Poets, Historians, Cosinographers, with one consent do confesse to be Rome, which is builded vpon seuen hilles, whose names are these: *Palatinus*, *Capitolinus*, *Auentinus*, *Exquilinus*, *Viminalis*, *Quirinalis*, and *Calius*. This is so plaine a notation of Rome to be Babylon, builded on seuen hilles, that the Angell could not more plainely haue expresseed Rome, though he had named her. Nay this is a more euident and certain description of Rome to be the See of Antichrist, then if in plaine words he had said, Babylon is Rome. For it might be, that some other citie then that here was meant, might haue the name of Rome, but no other citie could haue this notation, to be builded on seuen hills. For Constantinople was afterward called new Rome, but Constantinople was not builded vpon seuen hilles like vnto old Rome. Therefore this is a plaine and manifest circumlocution of Rome, which with no reason can receiue any other exposition.

For

For what boy going to the Grammer schoole, and reading in *Virgils Georgicks* this verse: *Septem qua una sibi muro circumdedit arces*: That citie (saith *Virgil*) which hath compassed seven hills within her walles. What boy, I say, in the Grammer schoole doth not vnderstand this to be meant of the citie of Rome, although the Poet in that place doth not once name Rome? With what face therefore will any man denie, that the Angell here meaneth any other citie by this Periphrasis and circumlocution, then Rome? For if any will be so froward to except, that the word of hills is not taken in the proper sence, but figuratiuely and metaphorically for some other thing, as some would seem to interpret seven hills in this place for seven kingdoms, he shal plainly be conuincd by these reasons: first, it were absurd that the Angell should repeat one thing twice; for in the next clause he sheweth that the seven heads do signifie kingdoms also: but specially we must remember, that this is an interpretation of the Angell, which must either be plaine and easie to be vnderstood, or it deserueth not the name of an interpretation. Therefore if the Angell, offering to expound the mysterie of the seven heads, giueth this exposition, that they signifie seven hills: if hills be not taken in their proper sence, to what purpose serueth this exposition? For if the name of hills hath need of another exposition, he had bene as good to haue left the name of heads vnexpounded. And as for the interpretation of hills to signifie Kings, is more obscure, darke, and far fet, then that heads should represent Kings; for it is more apt by metaphor to call a King an head, then to call him an hill. Therefore except we will say, that the interpretation of the Angell is vaine, yea more darke then the thing that is expounded by him, we must needs confesse that hills are taken in their proper sence for hills, and then the citie builded vpon seven hilles without all controuersie is the citie of Rome.

The fourth and last prooffe that I will take out of the holy scripture, is the last verse of the same seuenteenth chapter, which is yet a more plaine description of Rome, if any thing can be more plaine then that hath bene already spoken: for there the Angell in plaine words expoundeth, that the woman which *S. Iohn* saw, which was the great whoore Babylon, is that great Ci-

tie which hath dominion ouer the Kings of the earth. What brazen face is so impudent, to denie that Rome was that great citie which had dominion ouer the Kings of the earth at that time when this was spoken? Or what other citie had dominion ouer the Kings of the earth in *S. Iohns* time, but Rome? Who is therefore so froward and vntoward, that he will not acknowledge Babylon here to be plainly called Rome? If I should name the chiefe city of England, who would not vnderstand London? If I should speake of the chiefeft citie of France, who would not conceiue Paris? And when the Angell named the chiefe citie of the world, who could be ignorant, liuing in that time, or knowing the history of that time, that he vnderstood it of the citie of Rome, which was the sea of the Empire; and from whence we should looke that Antichrist should come, according to the former propheties? For it is a shame in this place to flie vnto allegories, and further expositions of this Angelicall interpretation, which as I said before, if it be not cleare, plaine, and easie to be vnderstood, deserueth not the name of an exposition: as when one knoweth one vnknowne thing is expounded by another as much or more vnknowne, it is vaine, superfluous, and ridiculous. Wherefore, whom any bonds of reason will hold in, they must be satisfied with the exposition of the Angell, that Babylon is Rome. For seeing it was necessary for the Church of God, to know aswell the place where Antichrist should sit, as to be instructed of his craft and crueltie: our Sauour Christ, the author of this Reuelation, would not suffer his congregation to be ignorant thereof, but sent his Angell plainly to interpret and expound the vision of the great whoore, that the Church being thoroughly admonished of her wickednesse, and instructed perfectly to know her, might more easly take heed of her, flie from her, and abhor her so that according to my promise I haue sufficiently proued by authoritie of holy Scriptures, this first proposition which I tooke in hand, that Babylon is Rome.

But because some are of such obstinate and wilful frowardnes, that nothing will satisfie them, but they will still grudge and repine, carpe, and obiect against my interpretations of holy Scriptures (for the texts they cannot deny) I wish them that are such, if they

they like not these expositions, which I haue brought to the defacing of Antichrist and his religion, that then they admit and reuerence those expositions, which their owne authors bring for the maintenance of the Popes authoritie and his religion: of which sort are these: *God (saith Moses in Genesis) made two great lights, the Sunne to rule the day, and the Moone to gouerne the night:* that is, saith the famous Interpreter, God ordained the Pope and the Emperour to rule the world. By the Sun is meant the Pope, and by the Moone the Emperour: and looke how much greater and more glorious the Sunne is then the Moone, so much greater and more glorious is the Pope then the Emperour. And not content with this, he counteth by Arithmetick how much greater the Sunne is in quantitie then the Moone, by proportion that it hath to the earth, and so by many parts he concludeth that the Pope is greater then the Emperour. But here a man might help him, what by Geometrie, and what by Arithmetick, for where as the Sunne is 166. times greater then the earth, and the earth 39. times greater then the Moone (as is proved by Mathematicall demonstration) the Pope should be 6474 times greater then the Emperour. This is one noble exposition that is set forth to aduance the dignitie of the Pope and his kingdome.

Another like to this, is vpon the words of the Apostles, which answered vnto our Sauour Christ, when he commaunded him that had no sword to sell his coate and buy one, signifying the great daunger that was at hand: *Lord (say they) here are two swords.* These swords (saith the Glosar) are the Ciuill and Ecclesiasticall power which remained in *Peter*, and therefore his successor the Pope hath preheminnce of both. No doubt a worthy interpretation, and that agreeth well with the text, and doth the Pope great worship. Againe, *S. Paul* saith to the Corinthians, 1. *Cor. 2. The spirituall man iudgeth all things, and he himselfe is iudged of none.* This spirituall man, saith the Interpreter, is the Pope, which is Iudge of all the world, and may not be controlled of any man, no though he draw with him innumerable soules into hell fire, there to be tormented with the diuell and him for euermore; yet no man must be so bold as to find fault with him, or to

say, *Domine, quid ita facis?* Lord, why do you so? Is not this an handsome exposition? Yea I promise you, even like vnto this other: *Statuimus ut Clerici nec comam nutriant, nec barbam radant:* We decree (saith the Canon of an auncient Councell) that the Clergie shall neither weare long haire, nor shaue their beards. The Glosar finding this Canon to be so cleane contrary vnto the custome of the Popish Clergie, who vse to weare long haire and to shaue their beards, thought he would draw it, at the least if it would not come by faire meanes, to maintaine the laudable custome of the Popish Clergie: and by exposition of one word, he maketh the whole Canon to serue his turne. Therefore *Statuimus* (saith he) which is, we decree, is to be expounded for *Abrogamus*, which is, we disanul or abrogate, and so the sense afterward falleth out very plaine for the popish Priests thus: We disanul that Priests shold go without long haire, or vnshauen beards. A right cunning interpretation, and proper for the place: and such in effect are all those that serue for the maintenance of the Popes authoritie, and the religion of Poperie. Therefore he that is of so sharpe iudgement, that he will mislike and refuse those plaine expositions which I haue brought of the places before alleaged, and except against them, as inforced, constrained, and far fetched: let him like of, praise, magnifie, and admire these interpretations, which are sought to vphold and establish the Popes throne and religion, as rightly, faithfully, and truly collected. *Atque idem iungat Vulpes, & mulgeat Hircos:* and by as good reason let him ioyne for his plough not Oxes but Foxes, and milke for his paille, not she Goates but he Goates, as the Poet saith.

Now that I haue proued Babylon to be Rome by authoritie of Scripture, it followeth that I must shew for the same the consent of auncient Doctōrs. And as in my former probation I touched onely such places as did plainly, directly, and manifestly set forth my purpose, so in this behalf I wil deale with the Doctōrs, Not such as they are wont to alleage against vs, names indeed of great and reuerent antiquitie, but workes of meere falshood and forgery, bewraying their authors not to be such as they are fathered vpon, but such as out of the bodie of blindness and superstition of much later time haue begotten them. Such are the decretall

decretal Epistles of the old Bishops of Rome, *Linus, Clemens, Anacletus*, &c. Of which, *Clemens* writing to *S. James* forsooth in his second Epistle chargeth him very earnestly that the Pixe be cleanly kept, so that there appeare no Mise dong, or any other filthines among the fragments of the body of Christ, with many other like Apostolicall commaundements. The impudencie of whose authors appeareth notably in this, that whereas they were ignorant buzzards that could not write true Latine, they would ascribe their counterfeit Epistles to so learned fathers, as though at that time when women and children spake Latine naturally as their mother tong, the Bishops were so vnlearned, that they did write so barbarously, and were not able to vtter their mind in true Latine.

But leauing those delicats for such as long after them, I will vse no authoritie for this purpose, but such as they cannot refuse, but that that is auncient, catholike, and autentickall. I will begin therefore with *Irenaeus*, one of the most auncient and autentickall writers that the Church hath: who in the fift booke of his treatise against all heresies, speaking of the sea of Antichrist, vpon the last verse of the 13. chapter of this Reuelation, where it is said, that the number of the beasts name is six hundred, sixtie and sixe, sheweth that the opinion of many in his time was, that seeing this name *ΛΑΤΙΝΟΣ*, which is in English, the Latine man, or

Romane, in the numerall Greeke letters containeth this number, that Antichrist must be sought at Rome. His words are these:

Sed & ΛΑΤΙΝΟΣ nomen sexcentorum sexaginta sex numerorum, &c. & valde verisimile est, quoniam verissimum regnum hoc habet vocabulum. Latini enim sunt qui nunc regnant. Also (saith he) this name *LATEINOS*, containing the number of 666. is thought to be the name of Antichrist: and it is very like so to be, for that which most vndoubtedly is a kingdome hath that name: for they be Latines which now do raigne.

You see by this testimonie of *Irenaeus*, that this prophetic of old time was vnderstood of Rome, and that the number of the beasts name is to be found in one that beareth rule at Rome. If this exposition or explication of the beasts name had bene deuised by *Luther, Zwinglius*, or *Caluin*, it might haue bene suspected

The nūbring
of the beasts
name by the
Greeke letters.

λ	30
α	1
τ	300
ς	5
ι	10
ν	50
ο	70
ο	200

666.

as a thing imagined of spite and enuy against the Church of Rome, but when it is brought forth by so auncient a Doctor, which liued not many yeares after this Reuelation was giuen, as he himselfe saith, that it was but a litle before his time, vnder *Domitian* the Emperour, which died thirteene hundred yeares before *Luther* was borne: we must needs iudge it both to be very auncient, and voide of all partialitie. Wherefore I will passe ouer diuers other applications of that number to other names, which neuertheless hit Babylon home, because they haue bene sought out of late by such as beare it wil vnto Rome. For I thinke this is sufficient with all reasonable men of equall iudgement, to proue that this is no new opiniõ, to seek the sea of Antichrist at Rome. They themselues to proue their doctrine catholicke, alleage authoritie of eleuen or twelue hundred yeares antiquitie: behold, this opinion is thirteene or foureteene hundred yeares old, that Antichrist should be a Romaine, and that the sea of his tyrannie should be at Rome.

The second witnesse of this assertion that Babylon is Rome, is *Tertullianus*, a very auncient writer also, who in plaine words affirmeth, that Babylon signifieth Rome, in the third booke against *Martion*, which denied that Christ had a true bodie. Wherefore *Tertullian* vseth this reason against him: *That thing which hath a figure of it, must be a thing of truth*: and so discoursing of many things figured, and the figures of them, cometh to these words: *Sic & Babylon apud Iohannem nostrum, Romana urbis figuram portat, perinde & magna, & regno superba, & sanctorum delatricis*: that is to say, euen so doth Babylon (in the Apocalips of our *S. Iohn*) beare the figure of the citie of Rome, which is altogether as great, and as proud in raigne, and as great a persecutor of the Saints, as Babylon was. You see therefore most clearly and plainely, that *Tertullian* with all his learning could not interpret these things that be written in this Reuelation concerning Babylon, to be applied to any other citie then Rome: and he is also a witnesse voide of all partialitie or affection to either part of them that strue in our dayes; for he departed neare about foureteene hundred yeares before our time: why should he not then be credited in this case?

Well,

Well, next vnto him I will ioine *Chrysostome*, in his Commentarie vpon the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the second chapter, in his fourth Homilie: where as *S. Paul* speaking of the manifestation of Antichrist, saith, they knew what was the stay, that he was not presently reuealed. But when that stay is taken away, he should be reuealed in his due time. *Chrysostome* expoundeth this stay to be the Romaine Empire, which must giue place vnto Antichrist: that like as the Persians came in place of the Chaldeans, the Grecians in place of the Persians, and the Romaines in place of the Grecians: euen so, Antichrist should inuade the Empire of the Romaines. *Vacantem imperij principatum inuadet, & tentabis ad se rapere hominum & Dei imperium:* Antichrist (saith he) shall inuade the vacant principalitie of the Empire, and shall assay to draw vnto himselfe the Empires both of God and men. And is it not manifest that the Papacie grew and tooke increase by the decay of the Empire, and at the fall of the Monarchie, challenged full possession of all dominion, both spirituall and temporall?

Of the same iudgement is *S. Ierome* writing vpon the same place of *Paul*, vnto *Agasia*, in the eleuenth question, whose words are these: *Nec vult aperte dicere Romanum imperium destruendum, quod ipsi qui imperant aeternum putant, vnde secundum Apocalypsim Iohannis in fronte purpurata meretricis scriptum est nomen blasphemie, id est Roma aeterna, &c.* that is, neither will he openly say, that the Romane Empire should be destroyed, which they that gouerne it thinke to be euerlasting: wherefore according to the Reuelation of Saint *Iohn*, in the forehead of the purple whoore there is written a name of blasphemie, which is, *Rome euerlasting*. Lo, here another witness of good antiquitie and sufficient credite, which not onely agreeth plainly with *Chrysostome*, that Antichrist should take possession of the Romaine Empire when it should be decayed in the Emperours: but also most plainly agreeing with *Tersullian*, calleth that Babylonickall strumpet, which is described in the seuenteenth chapter of this Apocalypsie, that purple whoore of Rome, and the name of blasphemie, to be *Rome euerlasting*: as though he had heard the Pope brag of the eternitie of his sea, which he

saith is the rocke, against which the gates of hell cannot preuaile. But he is foully beguiled, for Rome the sea of his Popedom is by Saint *Ieromes* iudgement that Babylon of whom the Angell preached, that howsoeuer she boasts of her eternity, *She is fallen, she is fallen, euen Babylon that great city, and neuer shall rise againe.*

They cry out against vs, that we raile and speake contumeliously of the holy sea of the Pope, when we call Rome the whore of Babylon: but when the old Doctours (to whose iudgement they themselues appeale from the authoritie of the Scriptures) feare not so plainly in their writings to paint out the Babylonick Strumpet in her right colours, and in flat words to say she is Rome, the mother of all abomination, and the sea of Antichrist: why should we be blamed for saying as we are taught by them? And especially of those men that make so great vaunts that the iudgement of the Fathers is altogether on their side: by whom they offer to be tried, when they dare not abide the iudgement of the Scriptures?

Again, consider I pray you; if the old Doctours before Antichrist were openly reuealed, did vnderstand by the Scriptures that he should sit at Rome: what thinke you would they haue said and written if they had liued in these daies, and knowne and seene all that was prophesied to be fulfilled in him? With what confidence suppose ye, would they haue inueyed against him? With how open mouthes would they haue cried out vpon him? At least wile do you not thinke in your conscience, that when they had considered the authoritie of the Pope, and his wholesome doctrine, they would haue changed their minds, and recanted their writings against Rome, and repented that euer they had called her the purple whoore of Babylon, seeing she is the holy mother Church of Rome, the sea of the most holy father the Pope the head of the same Church?

I must needs say thus much in your behalfe (O ye Papists) as ill as I loue you, that if *Ierome*, *Tertullian*, and the rest of the Doctours did so account of Rome as you affirme of them, they were much too blame to defame her with such odious names, as to call her the whoore of Babylon; which must needs make her vehemently

hemently suspected to be the Church of Antichrist, and not of Christ: for what Papist in these dayes dare say, that which *Ierome* said, that Rome is that purple Harlot Babylon, which *S. Iohn* speaketh of in the Apocalypse? The same *Ierome* in his 13. booke of Cōmentaries of the Prophecie of *Esay*, vpon the 47. chapter writeth in this maner: *Licet ex eo quod iuxta 70. scriptū est θυγάτηρ βαβυλῶνος, id est, filia Babylonis, non ipsam Babylonē quidam, sed Romanā urbem interpretantur, quā in Apocalypsi Iohannis & Epist. Petri Babylō specialiter appellatur, &c.* That is to say: For as much as the seuentie Interpreters write, not the daughter Babylon, but the daughter of Babylon, some do interpret thereof, not Babylon in Caldea, but the citie of Rome, which in the Reuelation of *S. Iohn*, and the Epistle of *Peter*, is specially called Babylon. Note that *Ierome* in this place accounted Rome to be Babylon the younger, daughter of Babylon the elder. And secondly, that this was not his opinion onely, but the consent of many other in his time, and namely, of such as vsed to interpret the Prophet *Esay*. Thirdly and especially consider, that he affirmeth Rome in the Apocalypse to be especially called Babylon. So that Babylon in the Apocalypse, by his iudgement, can be vnderstood for nothing else but Rome, because Rome is there specially figured by Babylon. What meaneth *Ierome* so often to beate in this naile, that Babylon is Rome? If it had slipped out of his pen but once, he might haue bene pardoned for his ouersight: but when he hath neuer done writing, that Rome is Babylon, why should we account him any longer for a Catholike?

For in his Preface vnto the booke of *Didimus*, *De Spiritu sancto*, which he translated out of Greeke into Latine, writing to *Paulinianus*, he vttereth these words: *Cū in Babylone versarer, & purpurate Meretricis essem Colonus, & iure Quiritum vixerem, &c.* Of late (saith he) when I was in Babylon, and was an inhabitant of the purple Harlot, and liued after the lawes of the Romaines, I thought to intreat somewhat of the holy Ghost. What needed *Ierome* in this place so odiously and contumeliously to call Rome by the name of Babylon, but that he could neuer consider Rome otherwise, but to be the See appointed for Antichrist? For in other places where he interpreteth the

Scriptures and Prophecies, concerning Antichrist, we may lesse maruell if he interpret Babylon for Rome, because no reason could leade him to expound it otherwise. But here talking pleasantly with his friend; what necessitie compelled him to vse such descriptions of Rome, but that this perswasion was so deeply grauen in his mind, that Babylon is Rome, that neither in earnest nor iest he could forget it, but is alwaies harping vpon it, as though he thought some to call Rome by any other name, then that he had learned in the Scriptures to be Babylon, and the purple harlot? For in like maner writing to *Marcella*, a vertuous Gentlewoman of Rome, whome he allured to forsake Rome, and to dwell neare vnto him in Bethelhem, one speciall reason that he vseth to perswade her, is this: That as Bethelhem whither he wold haue her to repaire, is situate in the holy Land, and the place consecrated to the birth of CHRIST: so Rome where she desired to remaine, was the Babylonicall harlot, according to the Reuelation of *S. Iohn*, appointed for the birth of Antichrist, which there should arise, and exercise his tyrannie, and from thence should deceiue the whole world with his wicked wiles.

But who so will reade the workes of *Ierome*, may find yet more places, in which he is bold to call Rome Babylon, the very See of Antichrist. Whereby it is apparant, that it is no new or strange matter to seeke Antichrist at Rome, when such old Doctors of the Church, so commonly in Commentaries, Epistles, and other writings, do teach vs that Rome is Babylon: and the Scripture affirmeth that Babylon is the See of Antichrist. But let vs leaue *S. Ierome*, and see what other say of the same matter.

S. Ambrose, writing a Commentarie vpon the Reuelation of *S. Iohn*, is of the same iudgement. Of the authoritie of the worke I will moue no question at this time, seeing it is commended to vs by *Cuthbert Tonsall*, late bishop of Duresme, who found it in an old Librarie, and first set it in print, vnder the name of that great *S. Ambrose*, and is willing that men should so thinke of it. It is good authoritie I say, against the Papists, being commended by so Catholike a Prelate, and because they are wont to receiue whatsoeuer cometh vnder the name of an old

old Doctor, though it be neuer so vnlike his writing, and crie out vpon vs for reiecting at our pleasure the workes of auncient Doctors, that make against our doctrine: as though we reiected any without cause, or they refused none for any cause: whereas *Pigius* their great Patron, blushed not to reiect the report of two generall Councils, the fift and sixt of Constantinople, which are commended to vs by publike faith of the Church of Constantinople, because in the one Pope *Honorius* is condemned and accursed for an heretike, and in neither of both the Popes Legates could haue the highest place, according to the request of their ambitious Maister. But as for this *Ambrose*, if he were not *Ambrose* of Millaine, yet is it apparant by the stile, that he was some auncient Writer of the Latine Church, and he throughout this Prophecie interpreteth Babylon to be Rome, and Antichrist to be sought no where but at Rome, *Primasius* also a very auncient Writer, who likewise commenteth vpon the Apocalypse, expoundeth these Prophecies of Antichrist to be fulfilled in the Romaine Empire, and of the citie of Rome.

S. *Augustine* in his learned worke *De Ciuitate Dei*, not once or twice, but oftentimes is bold to call Rome Babylon, and Babylon Rome, as in his sixteenth booke and seuenth chapter, he calleth Rome another Babylon in the West. And in his eighth booke and second chapter, he calleth Babylon of Caldea the first Rome; and Rome of Italie the second Babylon: willing men to consider, that in the beginning of the citie of God, which was the Church in *Abrahams* time, the first Rome, that was Easterne Babylon her enimie, was builded in Caldea, and about the same time that the first Babylon was destroyed, lest the citie of God should lacke her enimie, the second Babylon, which is Rome in Italie was erected. It is a strange matter, that the same citie which is the professed enimie of the citie of God, should be the mother of all religion, and the very citie of God it selfe. O *Augustine*, thou wast not well aduised to make the Citie of Rome enimie to the Citie of GOD; that Rome should be the same to the Church of GOD; that Babylon of old was to Ierusalem! The same *Augustine* in the 22. Chapter of the 18. booke, calleth Rome another Babylon, and daughter of the first:

Babylon. And in the 27. Chapter he calleth Rome westerne Babylon. By these & other testimonies of old Writers that might be brought but for tediousnesse, I suppose it is sufficiently proued, that Babylon in this my text spoken of, is Rome, and that we should not seek Antichrist to proceed from any other place then from Rome. But what need I trouble my selfe to seeke further testimoniall, for confirmation of this matter, that Babylon is Rome, then of the Papiests themselues? which affirme that S. *Peter* in his Epistle, where he sendeth salutations fro the Church gathered in Babylon, by Babylon vnderstandeth Rome. And they learne it of *Ieronime*, which in the life of S. *Marke* doth so expound it. So greedie they are to find a place in Scripture, where *Peter* should be said to haue bene at Rome, that they are content to acknowledge Babylon in the Scripture to be vnderstood of Rome. And thus I haue performed, I trust sufficiently, that which I tooke in hand to proue, both by the authoritie of holy Scripture in plaine and manifest texts, and by consent of many auncient writers, yea by the confession of the Papiests themselves, that Babylon in the Scripture is taken for Rome. And thus much for the first part, in which, because I haue bene ouer long, I will be shorter in that which remaineth.

In the second part I promised to declare how Babylon which is Rome is fallen, according to the Prophecie of this Angell: *She is fallen*, saith the Angell, *She is fallen*. He repeateth the word of falling for two causes: first, to declare the certainty of her decay, that howsoever she seemed to flourish & triumph, as though she should neuer haue fallen or come to ruine: yet God for her wickednesse most righteously, and for the comfort of his Church most mercifully, had decreed vndoubtedly that she should fall, when that time was once come, which in his most wise and well ordered counsell was appointed for her destruction. Secondly, he repeateth twiçe, that she is fallen, to shew, that she should haue an vnrecoverable fall: she should not fall as other Cities, which haue risen againe: but she should fall without all hope of recouerie, neuer to be restored againe. Therefore in the eighteenth Chapter, a mightie Angell taketh vp a great Mil-stone, and throweth it into the sea, saying: *With such*

such violence shall Babylon that great Citie be throwne downe, and neuer be seene any more. So that as it is impossible for a great Millstone, throwne with great force by a mightie Angell into the bottome of the sea, to rise vp againe and swim aboute the water: so impossible is it that Babylon, when she is at the lowest of her fall, should euer be set vp againe. And in the nineteenth Chapter, it is said: *That the smoake of her burning ascended vp for ever and euer.* Also of her vtter desolation, descriptions are made in the eighteenth Chapter, where it is said, that Babylon is made a dwelling place of diuels, a cage of vncleane birds: according to the Prophecie of *Esay* concerning old Babylon, that *Zym & Ohym*, which be Sprights and Goblins shall walke in her Palaces, Scrichowles and Ostriges shall crie in her houses, Apes and Satyres shall daunce in her beautifull buildings, No voice of men shall be heard in her, no sound of a Mill shall be heard, no light of a candle shall be seene, but perpetuall solitude and sorrow shall dwell there for euenmore. Therefore saith the Angell, *she is fallen, she is fallen, that is, she is destroyed, and neuer shall be repaired.*

But if we will better vnderstand how she is fallen, we must consider more distinctly wherein she is fallen. First, in wealth and riches she hath sustained a great fall. Consider how many kingdomes and states of the world haue renounced her obedience, and all those haue withdrawne great rents, reuenues, and commodities, that in times past were addicted to the maintenance of Babylon, the Church of Rome: A great fall without peraduenture, and that will neuer be recovered. Remember so many Abbeyes, Monasteries, Nunneries, Frieries, Hospitals, Chauntries, Churches and Chappels, now ouerthrowne and made euen with the ground. All lands, iewels, ornaments and great treasures that belonged vnto them, cleane taken away fro them: and you will confesse with me, that Rome in riches hath a great fall. Yea, if you would see with your eyes a manifest example of Gods iudgement against Babylon, behold those euill fauoured ruines and heapes of Monasteries, that were sometimes gorgeous and sumptuous buildings. The same end remaineth all that pompe and pride of Babylon not yet altogether beaten

downe, but euen now in falling. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, and his immutable counsell hath decreed it, and he hath sent an Angell to proclaime it.

Some with perchance, that Monasteries had stood still, and bene conuerted to better vses: but vndoubtedly the prouidence of God so ordered all things, that his curse which was vpon them might be executed, and the Prophecies that were concerning them, might be fulfilled, that they might be a monument of his wrath vnto all the posteritie, the beginning of the fall of Babylon, and an example of the destruction of all the rest, that should follow soone after. Who would euer haue thought that so great riches, treasures and reuenues should so suddenly be ouerthrowne, destroyed, and come to nothing? Therefore it is manifest, that the wealth and worldly substance, whereby the pride, voluptuousnesse, and intemperance of ryotous Rome was maintained, and growne to an intollerable excessse, is greatly diminished, sore decayed, and hath a foule fall, and shortly shall haue a finall fall.

Well, Babylon is not fallen onely in wealth and riches, but also in power and authoritie. For the kings of the earth which sometimes were subiect to that monstrous beast, haue now shaken off the yoke of her seruitude, and withdrawne the obedience of all their subiects from her. Yea, the most part of the ten hornes, which sometime gaue ouer their power and authoritie vnto the beast, which were all the Kings and Potentates that acknowledged the Pope for their supreme head, and soueraigne Lord, do now hate and abhorre the Harlot of Rome, and shall make her desolate by withdrawing their Subiects from her obedience, and naked by spoiling her of her treasures, and shall eate her flesh for pure hatred, and burne her with fire: *For great is the Lord which iudgeth her.* So that she which before at her pleasure might commaund all Princes to begin warre, to cease from warre, to defend her quarrels, to annoy her enemies, now is glad to flatter a few seduced Princes to take her part, that she be not vtterly forsaken of all men: or else to practise by treason and trecherie, suborning Rogues and Vagabonds to stirre vp tumults among the rude people, to trouble godly estates and common-

commonwealths that despise her dominion; but without all hope euer to recouer her auncient tyrannie.

Her thunderbolts of Excommunication, which were sometime terrible to all men, are now feared of no man. What thogh she retaine her proud and presumptuous stomacke, and will do while her breath lasteth, to pronounce sentence of deprivation against Princes that abhorre her wickednesse? Her impudent arrogancie is not so much detested of many, as laughed to scorn of all. Her Proctors and priuie practisers, though they change themselves like *Proteus*, into neuer so vnlikely shapes, are espied in euery corner. For God himselfe reuealeth their pretences, and will not suffer her to preuaile any longer. So that in power and authoritie Babylon is fallen, and falleth daily more and more into vtter contempt with all men, vntill she be vtterly consumed and brought to nothing, which will not be long before it come to passe. For this sentence that God hath pronounced against her, and begun also to execute, cannot be chaunged, or much longer deferred.

But especially and chiefly Babylon is fallen in credite of her doctrine. For besides so many Princes and estates of Christendome, that by publike authoritie haue received the Gospell, and vtterly abolished all Babylonicall doctrine: euen in the midst of her tyrannie and persecution, great multitudes daily are lightened with the bright beames of the Gospell: that for all Inquisitions, imprisonments, exquisite torments, and cruell burnings, they neuer a whit diminish, but rather increase, as God hath provided that the blood of the Martyrs should be the seed of the Church. And they are more then obstinate, if they do not acknowledge that this matter is gouerned from God above. For if it had bene of men, it must needes haue decayed before this time, and haue come to nought, as *Gamaliel* said of the doctrine of the Apostles. Therefore in fighting against it, they shew themselves but after the maner of the old Gyants, to make warre against God. Or as it is contained in this Prophecie, that Antichrist should gather together the Princes of the earth to make battell against him that sitteth vpon the white Horse, whose name is *The word of God*, but all to their vtter confusion

and destruction. For the word of God must conquer and preuaile in the last age, and Antichrist must be consumed by the spirit of the mouth of Christ, which is his holy word, and vtterly abolished by the glorious brightnesse of his coming to iudgement, as *S. Paule* testifieth in the second Chapter of the second Epistle to the Thessalonians. Therefore it is vaine that they seeke to vnderprop the doctrine of Babylon by crueltie and tyrannie, for all will not serue, seeing the time of her final fall approacheth, and now already our Sauour Christ with the spirit of his mouth hath wasted and consumed a great part of that credit & estimation, in which the doctrine of Babylon of long time hath triumphed. And it is our parts to pray that her credit may dayly more and more decrease, that the kingdom of Christ may be perfectly established amongst vs, and the kingdome of Antichrist overthrowne, euen from the foundations, that no superfluous relicks of Babylonical religion may remain where the church of Christ is in building, but that the doctrine of Babylon may fall altogether.

Thus I haue declared that Baylon in wealth and substance, in power and authoritie, in credit & estimation of her doctrine, is false, and that without hope of recovery: for her credit is cracked, not onely amongst her enemies the Protestants, but euen amongst her best friends and greatest Arch-papists. For I suppose there is none in the world so blind, so superstitious, so deuoutly addicted in all points of Popish idolatrie and superstition, as they were 30. or 40. yeares past. Although they close their eyes neuer so obstinately against the light of Gods word, yet some effect of the beames of force wil pierce euen through their eye-lids. And that they themselves cannot dissemble, although they would neuer so saine, but that they haue bene deceived with grosse errors and shameful superstitions: their pardons, their pilgrimages, their legends: who is now so blind that seeth not how the world hath bin seduced by them? And the simplicitie of the people abused to satisfie their insatiable couetousnesse?

As for the greatest Patrons of Poperie that be learned, they cannot denie, but that great errors haue bene receiued and taught for truth. Yea the Pope himselfe hath acknowledged, that many errors haue crept into the church, yea euen into the

Mass:

Masse: but the reformation of them pertaineth to him alone and the generall Councell. But what hope of reformatiō is to be looked for at their hands, let it be seene in the decrees of the last Councell of Trent. What litle Mife those great mountaines in so many yeares trauell haue brought forth? In fortie or fiftie yeares consultation two great matters reformed. One for Pardoners not to be common pedlers, another for the Communion in both kinds, to those that desire it, so they confesse it were as good in one kind, and agree with them in all other points of Poperie. Yet all was not well, they confesse by their correction. And as for the greatest Pillars and Proctors they haue, if they be pressed neare, acknowledge a great deale more. As one that landed lately at Yarmouth, before witnesse of good credit testified, that if he might be satisfied in two points, concerning the Popes supremacie, and the reall presence, for other matters he would not greatly strue. So that I will conclude, that Babylon is fallen in riches, in power, in credit of Doctrine, not onely with Protestants, but euen with Papists themselves.

But now I know what will be objected against me, That I haue trauelled all in vaine, to proue that Babylon is fallen, and that Babylon is Rome: and that I haue abused the texts of Scripture, and sentences of old Doctors, to proue the same. For whatsoeuer is contained either in the Scripture, or in the writings of the auncient Doctors, to proue that Babylon is Rome, is to be vnderstood of Rome vnder the heathen Emperours, and not vnder the Popes: and that all this while I haue wrested the Scriptures, and enforced the Doctors to affirme that which they neuer thought of. Indeed I will confesse that some Prophecies contained in this Reuelation, were fulfilled in the heathen Emperours, and that the heathen Empire was an introduction vnto Antichrist: but that Antichrist the great enemy of the church of Christ, and which is principally called Antichrist, could not be any of the heathen Monarchie, I will make it manifest by plaine demonstrations. And first I will retaine this Principle sufficiently proued before, that Rome is the See of Antichrist, and that by authoritie of Scriptures, and consent of auncient Writers, we can seeke him no where but in the Romaine Em-

pire. And now the controuersie resteth in this, whether the heathen Emperours or the Pope be he.

First, *S. Paul* in the second chapter of the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, speaking purposely of Antichrist, saith expressly, that he shall sit in the Temple of God, which is the Church of Christ. But it is manifest that the heathen Emperours did not sit in the Church of God, therefore the heathen Emperour is not this Antichrist. And by the same reason it is manifest, that *Mahomet* is not that especiall Antichrist, because he sitteth without the temple of God, as there be diuers that would haue these things to be vnderstood of *Mahomet* or *Ottomannus*: but it is as cleare as the Sunne at noone dayes; for as much as neither the heathen Emperours, nor *Mahomet*, nor *Ottomannus* sitteth in the Temple or Church of God, that none of them is that great Antichrist, of whom the propheties of the Scripture are to be expounded.

And whereas some of them interpret the abomination of desolation whereof Christ speaketh, to be meant of Antichrist, or at leastwise to be a signe of him, that cannot be vnderstood of the heathen Emperours, or any other that is without the Church: for that standeth in the holy place which is the temple, and signifieth the Church. Now the Pope sitteth in the midst of the temple of God, and boasteth himself to be God, chalenging to himselfe such authoritie as is proper only to God, and vsurping such honour as is peculiar onely to God. Therefore not in the heathen Emperours, but in the Popes is this prophesie accomplished.

Another reason to proue that Antichrist (which in this Reuelation is foreshewed to come into the world) cannot be vnderstood to be the heathen Emperours, is taken out of the seuenteenth chapter of the same booke: for there the Angell interpreting to *S. Iohn* the mysterie of the beast that beareth the harlot, which hath seven heads, signifying seven hilles, he declareth also that they signifie seven Kings, or principall estates, or formes of regiment, for so the name of King is often taken in the Prophets and specially in *Daniel*, at which prophesie *S. Iohn* borroweth many phraes. Of these seven heads, five (he saith) were fallen, the.

the sixt was then presently in authority, and the seventh was not yet come, which seventh was the monstrous beast Antichrist, that was both the seventh and the eight. Now it is evident, that this could not be vnderstood of the heathen Emperours: for *Nero* the first persecuting Paynim was come and gone, and *Damitian* another persecutor, (by whose tyrannie *S. Iohn* was banished into the Ile of Pathmos, where he saw and received this Reuelation) was then in authoritie: so that of the Monarchie or tyrannie of heathen Emperours, this could not be vnderstood, and of the Christian Emperours, no man will expound it: so that it must needs be turned over to the Pope, for it can rest in no place else: and being referred vnto him, all the rest haue a very apt exposition.

For the citie of Rome, and the dominions thereof, hath had seuen principall states or formes of regiment: the first state of Kings, the second of Consuls, the third of Decemviri, the fourth of Dictators, the fift of Triumviri, the sixt of Cæsars or Emperors, and the seventh of Popes. Now five of these states or formes of regiment were fallen and abolished in *Saint Iohns* time; the sixt which was the Emperours, in his time was in place, and the seventh which is the Popes, was not yet come, which was the very beast it selfe: the Romaine Empire reuiued and raised vp from the bottomlesse pit of hell into the vsurped tyrannie of the Pope. And this is that beast, that sometimes was of wonderfull great power and glory in the dayes of *Augustus*, and some other of his successors; but then much decayed, as if it had not bene, although in some sort it were, but should be restored in the vsurped authoritie of the Pope, that claimeth all the world to be his Diocese: which power commeth not from God, but from the Prince of pride, out of the bottomlesse pit. But chiefly let vs consider, that the beast although he be but one, yet in the account he standeth for two, for he is that seventh head, and the eight also. And remember that the Pope, challengeth double authoritie, namely the power of both the swords, the spirituall and temporall. So that in this exposition all things agree most aptly.

Againe, it is manifest in the Scriptures, that Antichrist should

deceiue the world with false doctrine, vnder pretence and colour of true religion, and therefore so often times the Scripture warneth men, that they be not seduced by him: which were needles, if any open professed enemy of Christ should be that Antichrist. For there is no likelihood that an heathen man, a Iew or a Turk should deceiue any multitude of true Christians: but he that vnder the pretence of the name of Christ, seeketh most of all to deface the honour of Christ, he is a subtle aduersarie, and the very spirit of Antichrist, as *S. Iohn* also in his Epistle doth testifie. For in the second chapter speaking of these Antichrists, which were the fore-runners of the great Antichrist, he sheweth that they went out from the Church. And in the fourth chapter he calleth them false Prophets, and teacheth men how to know the spirit of Antichrist, *He that denieth Iesus to be Christ, he that denieth that Iesus Christ is come in the flesh: that is, he that derogateth any thing from the honour of Iesus to be Christ, and in his flesh to haue performed the full worke of mans redemption, as the Pope doth most blasphemously, he is Antichrist: and who so teacheth any such doctrine, speaketh by the spirit of Antichrist.* For the testimony of Iesus is the spirit of prophesie. Seeing therefore that *S. Iohn* accounteth Antichrist for one that is gone from the church, & for a false Prophet, it is cleare that Antichrist is no heathen Emperor, which was neuer of the Church, nor yet a false Prophet that tooke vpon him to teach in the Church. The same may be said of *Mabomet*, who neuer professed himselfe to be a Christian, nor yet a Prophet in the Church of Christ, pretending to uphold the religion of Christ, but an open enemy of the Gospel, & of our Saviour Christ, altogether without the Church. By these arguments I doubt not but all men may see, that seeing Babylon is Rome, and that the head of Babylon is Antichrist, that he cannot be any of the heathen Emperours, but euen the Pope himselfe. And therefore I conclude according to my text, that Rome is fallen, if Babylon be fallen.

Now remaineth the last part that I promised to intreate of, namely the cause of Gods so seuerer iudgment against Babylon, that he hath decreed her utter ouerthrow and destruction, which the Angel comprehendeth in these words, *Because she hath made*
all

all nations drunke with the wine of the furie of her fornication: that is, she hath deceiued all the world with false doctrine, which he compareth vnto two kinds of vices, whereby men are so deceiued, that they loose all their right iudgement, drunkennesse and fornication: for as these two vices do allure men to commit them, by coueting of vaine delectation that is in the; euen so Babylon hath inticed all men like another *Circe*, to drink of the cup of her delectable errors, and to commit most filthy fornication with her idolatrous religiō. For of al other religions, to the carnal man none is so pleasant as Poperie is, in which be so many kinds of satisfactiō to be obtained, both in this life and after men be dead, that there is no greater securitie for an hypocrite to sleepe in, the in the faire promises of Poperie. And that causeth so many willingly to embrace it, and so loth to depart fro it, because they would still continue without checke of true doctrine, which calleth men to repentance, & amendment of life, or else threatneth eternall damnation. For howsoeuer it pleaseth them to charge the doctrine of the Gospell with cause of securitie, it may easily be seene by comparison of it with the doctrine of Poperie, whether is cause of securitie: that which teacheth no satisfaction but one, for them that be penitent in this life: or theirs that hath so many wayes to merit rewards, and to satisfie for sinnes, not only while men liue in the world, but also for them that are already gone out of it. And there is no wine so sweet to the tast of a carnall man, as that which maketh him drunke with opinion of his owne righteousness: as it is the nature of strong wine, to make very cowards thinke themselves to be valiant champions: and such is the cup of popish doctrine, containing merits and satisfactions.

Againe, when we consider that Antichrist should make men drunke with his erroneous doctrine, we maruell lesse how men could be so blinded and infatuate, that they could not see and perceiue such grosse errors and manifest vntruths as are in Poperie. For as they that are overcome with the strength of wine, haue lost the right vse both of their wit and of their senses: euen so they that are drunke with the hereticall doctrine of Papistrie, do grope in the cleare light of the Sunne, and see not their owne

deformitie, though all the world beside crie out of them. In like manner, they that be ouercome with the vnhoneft loue of harlots, they haue their reason so imprisoned in corrupt affection and foolish fantasie, that they are at libertie neither to see their owne folly, nor to admit any wise and godly counsell. So it fareth with those that the Babylonical *Circe* the Church of Rome hath allured by her inchauntments, to commit spirituall fornication with her, they cannot abide to heare the voice of them that call them out of that damnable estate, so highly they please themselves in their owne misery, as if they were in case of perfect felicitie. This is the effect of their drunkennesse, this is the effect of their fornication, and this is the iust iudgement of God, that they which haue shut vp their eares from hearing the truth, should be deceiued with strong delusions, that they might beleue lies. Furthermore, by the names of these vices, the Angell comprehendeth all other vices that follow drunkennesse and incontinencie. For these crimes go not vnaccompanied, for where either of them is, commonly both will be, and they haue either of them, and both together, their traine to waite vpon them: and all these we see to haue ouerflowed in Rome the Westerne Babylon, as she her selfe, though she haue a brazen forehead, and be past all shame, cannot denie altogether. And because of these so great and hainous inormities, the iust sentence of God pronounced here by the Angell, is come vpon her, that she is now in her fall and decay, as she was once in her ruffe and glorie. But this especially is to be noted, that the Angell here saith, that *she should deceiue all nations with the furie of her fornication*. For this is the great vniuersalitie that they make so great bragges of, and would haue it to be a certaine note and marke of the Catholicke Church to be vniuersall. Behold the Angell sayth here in plaine words, that all nations should drinke of the wine of the furie of her fornications: Where is then the vniuersall consent and vnitie of all nations in Religion, that maketh a true Religion? and yet vniuersalitie and vnitie be two great pillars of the Church of Rome. And for my part, I do not enuie her those markes which she challengeth of vniuersalitie and vnitie (although we might stand

stand in law with her for them,) but let her peaceably inioy them: for they may helpe to proue her to be the false Church of Antichrist, but they cannot make her to be the true Church of Christ. We see plainly that Babylon hath here vniuersalitie and vnitie, for she maketh all nations to drinke of the furious wine of her fornication: but the Church of Christ (as he himselfe sayth) is a small flocke; and himselfe by *Simeon* is said to be a signe of contradiction, a marke that is gaine-said of most men.

And here also is answered one great mightie obiection, wherewith they thinke to choke vs: That seeing the Church of Christ is the Spouse of Christ, how could it be that Christ should forsake his Spouse, and suffer her to continue in damnable errors so many hundred yeares? Why, Christ himselfe declareth, that the deceits and errors of false Prophets should be so great, that if it were possible the very elect should be deceiued: yea, there should be such a miserable dispersion, that scarce two true professors of his name should remaine together in one place, and yet the holy band of vnitie should be in the head, which is our Sauour Christ: for wheresoeuer the carcassee is, thither the Eagles would be gathered. And Saint *Paule* in manifest words declareth, that the second comming of Christ should not be before there were a generall apostacie, that is, a departure from the true faith and Religion of Christ, and that the sonne of perdition Antichrist were openly shewed. And in this Reuelation how often is it said, that Antichrist should deceiue all the world, all nations, people and tongues, and that the Church of Christ should be driuen into the wildernesse, out of the sight of the world, and there remaine a space, vntill she should be brought againe to light and open knowledge of all men? As it is come to passe this day, Gods name be therefore euerlastingly praised.

But because I haue occupied long time, I will draw to an end: for by that I haue said, I trust it doth sufficiently appeare, that God according to his righteous iudgement, hath determined vterly to ouerthrow Babylon, because she hath de-

ceiued all nations with the wine of the furie of her fornication. And now it resteth onely that I speake a word or two of the voice of the third Angell, which is a consequent of this my text, and serueth very aptly for the conclusion of my Sermon.

The third Angell followed, crying with a loud voyce, saying: *If any man shall worship the Beast, or his image, or receiue his marke on his forehead, or in his hand; or shall acknowledge any obedience or reuerence to him, as willing to drinke of the cup of Babylons fornication, the same shall drinke of the wine of the furie of Gods wrath, which is powred forth unmingled into the great cuppe of Gods anger, and they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, before the Lambe and his holy Angels, and the smoke of their torments shall ascend for euermore, and they shall haue no rest day nor night from extreame torments that worship the Beast, or shew any reuerence vnto Antichrist.* The effect is in few words: that horrible, intollerable, and eternall torments remaine for all them that now (especially when Babylon is now discouered) will haue any thing to doe with her damnable errors and pernicious doctrine: for howsoeuer ignorance before her fall, though it were inexcusable, yet seemed to diminish the greatnesse of the crime; now that her wickednesse is openly displayed, no pretence can saue men from the extremitie of Gods wrath, if they will still obstinately continue in her heresies.

Let vs therefore pray vnto Almightye God instantly, that all men in their vocation may seeke the vtter ouerthrow and destruction of Babylon: that Princes and Magistrates may according to the prophecies of them, hate her with a perfect hatred, and vtterly abolish whatsoeuer belongeth to her: that they may reward her, as she hath rewarded vs, and giue her double punishment according to her workes: and in the cuppe of affliction that she hath powred forth for vs, they may powre forth double as much to her. And looke how much she hath glorified her selfe, and liued in wantonnesse, (which was without measure) so much they may be-
flow.

flow vpon her of sorrow and torments. That Preachers and Ministers of Gods word may plainly and without dissimulation or halting, discouer her wickednesse, and earnestly to vrge whatsoeuer hath yet need of perfect reformation. That all subiects may continue in holy obedience, first to God, and then to their Prince, to the aduancing of the honour and glorie of God, through Iesus Christ : to whom with the holy Ghost be all honor, glory, power and dominion, both now and euer. Amen.

FINIS.

